

U.S. to meet with Iraqi rebels today

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States will hold its first high-level meeting since the Gulf war with Iraqi dissidents at the State Department Wednesday, department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler said Tuesday. Assistant Secretary of State John Kelly will meet six Iraqi Muslim intellectuals, representing Sunni and Shiite sects and a cross-section of opposition groups, she told reporters. Two American citizens will be part of the group. This is expected to be the first of four meetings with Iraqi dissidents over the next three days. Kurds will be represented in the later meetings, Ms. Tutwiler said (see earlier story on page 5).

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالإنجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية 'الراي'

U.N. braces for new flood of refugees

GENEVA (AP) — U.N. agencies have sharply increased their estimate of how many Iraqi refugees may flee their strife-torn country to neighbouring Turkey and Iran, a United Nations official said Tuesday. Carrol Faubert, head of a Gulf task force at the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), said humanitarian agencies are preparing for tens of thousands of new Iraqi arrivals. The announcement followed Iraqi government reports that rebellions by Shiite Muslims in the south and Kurdish guerrillas in the north have been virtually crushed. In Iran, where at least 50,000 Iraqis have sought refuge in recent weeks, the U.N. now wants to be able to help at least 100,000, Mr. Faubert told a news conference. The original "planning figure" was 35,000, he said. For Turkey, the number of possible Iraqi refugees was raised to 50,000, a 2.5-fold increase. About 7,000 Iraqis have fled to Turkey over the past 10 weeks, Mr. Faubert said.

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Iraq says Kurdish rebellion will be totally stamped out

Combined agency dispatches

IRAQ said Tuesday that it would take a few more days to stamp out the rebellion among the Kurds in the north and U.S. defence officials challenged the rebels' claim that they had retaken the northern oil city of Kirkuk.

The Iraqi News Agency quoted the newspaper of the ruling Baath party as saying the Kurdish areas would be purged of rebels within a few days and the region would get back an unspecified degree of political autonomy.

The collapse of the Kurdish rebellion in major urban centres like Erbil, Dohuk and Zakho indicated the unrest was crumbling throughout the region and "they know their inevitable end is near," the agency quoted Al Thawra as saying.

Kurdish rebel leaders said pockets of resistance were still holding out.

Foreign journalists fleeing into western Turkey said Iraqi government forces controlled much of the Kurdish area, with hundreds of thousands of Kurds trying to flee over the snow-capped mountains into Iran and Turkey.

Some of the foreign reporters fleeing the fighting crossed into Turkey by swimming across a border stream late Monday because two bridges were destroyed in the past month (see page 2).

The journalists that got out said an unidentified reporter was killed and two others injured in the fighting. Fifteen more journalists were reported waiting to cross.

Those already out included journalists from the Washington Post, Wall Street Journal, ABC television and Cable News Network.

In Washington, U.S. defence officials challenged a claim by Kurdish rebels that they had recaptured Kirkuk, and said troops loyal to the government of President Saddam Hussein appeared to remain in control there.

"No, it has not (been recaptured). They (Kurds) have pulled back into the mountains basically," said one of the officials when asked whether U.S. intelligence indicated Kirkuk had been retaken six days after the Kurds lost it to government forces.

"We have no evidence that that has happened," said another of

the defence officials, who asked not to be identified. "The government appears to be in control."

In Damascus, rebel Kurds said government troops still controlled central Kirkuk, but Kurdish forces had retaken its outskirts.

"The Kurdish rebels captured the suburbs of Kirkuk and there is fierce fighting going on in the heart of the city, but (government) forces are still in the centre," a Damascus spokesman for the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) said.

A spokesman for another big guerrilla group, the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) said rebels had advanced towards Kirkuk, seizing the nearby Rahmawi area in heavy fighting.

President Saddam on Monday chaired the first meeting of Iraq's new cabinet and "issued directives in an opening address," the Iraqi News Agency reported.

The agency, which gave no further details of the meeting, also said that President Saddam had had talks with his deputy Izzat Ibrahim who briefed him on developments in the Kurdish north.

Mr. Ibrahim, vice-chairman of

the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) and deputy commander of the Iraqi armed forces, led government troops that retaken Kirkuk and the towns of Erbil and Dohuk. They also reported retaking the town of Zakho.

INA said Mr. Ibrahim "conveyed the greeting of the Kurdish people and their profound thanks for the care accorded to them by President (Saddam)." It did not say when the meeting took place.

INA said Interior Minister Ali Hassan Al Majeed visited Dohuk where he inspected public utilities and private properties "sabotaged and looted by agent mobs."

It added that Health Minister Abdul Salam Mohammad Saeed had visited the holy city of Karbala, one of the sites of an earlier rebellion by mainly Muslim Shiites (see page 2).

President Saddam named a new government with Saadoun Hammadi as prime minister on March 23.

A journalist who arrived in Turkey was quoted as saying the Iraqi army appeared to be in good shape despite their setback

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France, Turkey push for U.N. action in Iraq

PARIS (AP) — France broke a tacit alliance among the anti-Iraq allies Tuesday, saying it would demand that the U.N. Security Council take urgent action to spare Kurds and Shiite Muslims from the rebellion.

But the move was criticised by Kurds as coming too late. The rebels, pounded by helicopter gunships, tanks and heavy artillery, have fled to mountain strongholds from towns they captured in northern Iraq.

"The Americans and British stayed silent on all our appeals for aid," said a representative of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan, one of the principal rebel groups.

"The allies closed their eyes while (Iraqi forces) bombed us ...

so as not to upset their Arab and Turkish allies by putting the borders of the region in question," he said.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Daniel Bernard said that France would urge the council and U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar to stop the violence.

Top Turkish officials meanwhile asked that the Security Council be summoned in emergency session to discuss the plight of at least 200,000 Kurds trying to flee northern Iraq.

The recommendation was announced after a meeting of the advisory National Security Council (NSC) under President Turgut Ozal.

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Top Kuwaiti general demands democracy

KUWAIT (Agencies) — A Kuwaiti army general, the most senior soldier to stay behind and fight Iraqi forces, Tuesday criticised the pre-invasion conduct of the ruling Sabah family and demanded more democracy in the emirate.

"I hope the politicians from the other side (the ruling family) understand the situation, do the right thing and meet the demands of the people," Major-General Mohammad Badr told Reuters in an outspoken interview.

Gen. Badr, who met the Emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, last week with six other local leaders, warned that most who fought the Iraqis were youngsters who wanted political change "whom we cannot control

like we control ourselves."

He said that although he had ordered members of his group to disarm, many of the young fighters had kept their guns.

"We are against violence..." the general said. "But we want freedom and democracy like any other people in the world."

Ninety-six former deputies, opposition leaders, merchants, Muslim leaders and professionals sent the Emir a five-page document on Monday demanding elections, elimination of favouritism, freedom of speech and press, independence of the judicial system and a unity government not dominated by Sabahs.

Gen. Badr, who said he had no personal political ambitions, cal-

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Palestinians wary of Lebanon disarmament plan

DAMASCUS (R) — Syrian-based Palestinian groups said Tuesday a plan to disarm militia groups in Lebanon could work in Beirut but Palestinian fighters in the south needed guns to face Israel.

Abu Ali Mustafa, deputy chief of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), said Palestinians were ready to give up their limited armed presence in Beirut and nearby hills in line with the Lebanese government's efforts to extend its authority throughout the country.

But he added that Palestinians should keep their guns in southern Lebanon as long as Israel and its militia allies held a border strip there.

"We are ready to reach a political agreement on all issues but if they want to use force to disarm us, we will resist, we will defend

ourselves," he told Reuters.

Mr. Mustafa said disarming Palestinians in Beirut would not be an issue. "The problem will emerge in the south because of the Israeli factor," he added. "It all depends if Israel implements U.N. Security Council Resolution 425."

The resolution calls for the restoration of Lebanese state authority in the south and an Israeli withdrawal.

Daoud Al Talhami, an official of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), said Palestinians would not need weapons to protect themselves in Beirut refugee camps if the Lebanese government was in full control of the capital.

"But it's hard for us to hand over our arms in the south as long as Israeli occupation and aggression continues," he said.

Israel and its South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia allies occupy a 15-kilometre deep buffer zone carved out in 1985.

The Beirut government Thursday ordered Palestinian and Lebanese militias to give up their guns by the end of April, or face forcible disarmament by Syrian and Lebanese troops.

Syria, which crushed the power of Christian General Michel Aoun last November, is now trying to extend the writ of the Damascus-backed government throughout Lebanon.

With some 40,000 troops in Lebanon, it wants to enforce an Arab-brokered peace pact reached in the Saudi Arabian city of Taif in 1989.

The pact called for sectarian and political militias to be disbanded. It said Israel should quit the south and Syrian troops

should redeploy from Beirut to the eastern Bekaa Valley.

"We will not block the implementation of the Taif accord," Mr. Talhami said. "We are keen to see it implemented, especially the end of the Israeli occupation and implementation of 425."

Most Palestinian guerrillas in Beirut belong to pro-Syrian factions unlikely to challenge the wishes of Damascus.

They are grouped under the umbrella of the National Salvation Front whose head, Khaled Al Fahoum, told Reuters:

"We are ready to obey the Lebanese government's orders provided the army is in charge of protecting the Palestinians."

Mr. Fahoum said Palestinians should either surrender their weapons to the Lebanese army or send them to Syria.

Iran releases British businessman

LONDON (Agencies) — British businessman Roger Cooper, arriving home after serving five years in Iranian jail on espionage charges, said he was arrested because he matched the Iranian profile of a proper British spy.

Mr. Cooper, 55, in a tailored dark grey suit and pin-striped shirt and dark tie, was gaunt, pale and slightly unsteady on his feet as he emerged from a Lufthansa

airline flight from Frankfurt about 10:30 a.m. (0930 GMT), accompanied by his daughter, Gisu.

But speaking a few minutes later to reporters, Mr. Cooper was quick-witted, good humoured and articulate in describing his arrest and his years spent in Iran's Evin high-security prison.

"It is not as bad as you probably think," Mr. Cooper said, adding that he wanted to "be as

positive as I can" to encourage recent political developments in Iran.

Asked why an oil marketing executive would be arrested for spying, Mr. Cooper said:

"I think I do match the profile, as seen from Tehran, of an English spy in the same way the airlines can spot who has the profile of a terrorist."

He said he had lived in Iran since 1958, spoke Farsi and had held a number of jobs over the years.

"The Iranians, unfortunately, do have a paranoia — not entirely unjustified — that the British and other Western nations, particularly the Americans, are out to spy on them... perhaps I fitted the bill for that," he said, adding "there may have been other reasons."

Iran has taken a major step towards normalising relations

with Britain by releasing Mr. Cooper.

"This morning, after serving his sentence, Mr. Roger Cooper was released and immediately deported," Tehran Radio said in a brief announcement.

British officials said Charge d'Affaires David Reddaway was rung early Tuesday and told to go to the airport at once to receive Mr. Cooper.

The handover occurred at 00.45 local (2215 GMT on Monday) at Tehran's Mehrabad international airport and the two men immediately boarded a Lufthansa flight for Frankfurt.

Iran and Britain restored diplomatic ties last September, 18 months after Tehran broke links in the row over the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's decree calling for the death of British author Salman Rushdie.

Mr. Cooper's release raised

hopes for the freeing of British hostages held by pro-Iranian factions in Lebanon, and was heralded as a step towards better relations between Britain and Iran.

But Mr. Cooper was reluctant to link release with that of the four Britons, six Americans, two Germans and an Italian believed held by pro-Iranian factions in Lebanon.

"I think it would be wrong to hold out hope for those people," he said. "Their conditions are likely to be much worse than anything I have seen. I have heard about people being blindfolded, chained up, this never happened to me."

Iranian authorities arrested Mr. Cooper on Dec. 7, 1985, allegedly for overstaying his visa. He was later convicted of spying.

King, German leaders discuss peace

BONN (Agencies) — His Majesty King Hussein and German President Richard von Weizsaecker Tuesday held a closed meeting at the presidential palace, followed by an extensive meeting attended by senior Jordanian and German officials.

The talks focused on the situation in the Middle East and the latest developments in the region as well as proposals for finding a peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestine question, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said.

The meeting was attended on the Jordanian side by Royal

Court Chief Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, King Hussein's Political Advisor Adnan Abu Odch, Foreign Minister Taher Al Masri and Jordanian Ambassador in Bonn Khalid Madadiah. On the German side, the meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Hans Dietrich Genscher, the minister of state for foreign affairs and the head of the presidential office, as well as the director of the Middle East department.

King Hussein and the accompanying delegation arrived in Bonn from Paris at the end of a working visit to France.

Later Tuesday the King received in his residence Mr. Genscher and pursued talks with him.

Mr. Genscher said afterwards the talks were an important part of preparations for next Monday's conference of European Community (EC) foreign ministers on post-war policy in the Gulf.

"The foreign minister expressed his opinion that Jordan must play an important role in the peace process after the end of Gulf hostilities," his ministry said.

King Hussein, in his earlier talks with President Von Weizsaecker, said contacts between

Israel and Palestinians should be established quickly to assist peace efforts.

The foreign minister also quoted him as saying that Europe's experience with East-West confidence-building measures and disarmament should be applied in the Middle East.

The King was apparently referring to the conference on security and cooperation in Europe, a 35-nation process which gradually dismantled East-West barriers over a period of nearly 20 years.

King Hussein, who will go to Vienna Wednesday, held talks in Paris with President Francois Mitterrand.

Israeli minister wants tougher anti-Arab action

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Cabinet Minister Ehud Olmert warned Tuesday that Israel's inner cabinet had armed its security forces with tougher powers to combat the 38-month-old Palestinian uprising.

Confirming the cabinet's approval of the steps, Health Minister Olmert acknowledged that the measures were likely to be unpopular with Israel's U.S. ally.

But he said the Jewish state was at "war" with Palestinians after a wave of attacks in which seven Israelis were killed over the past five weeks.

He gave no details of a secret meeting on Sunday but said: "There are some measures that aren't quite gentle and aren't quite pleasant... but the point is, in a war of this type one can't always use pleasant means... maybe the people who carry out these attacks should think about

that too."

Mr. Olmert added however: "I don't think the inner-cabinet decision means a rise in degree in the means the security forces are ordered to use."

"All it is that there is a series of very effective measures that can be taken under the circumstances," he told army radio.

Ministers have been sworn to secrecy over the meeting, but an aide to one participant did not deny media reports that they agreed to expel Palestinians deemed to have encouraged resistance activities, to demolish their homes and further to limit access to Israel.

This would include, according to Israel, occupied Arab Jerusalem, the cultural, religious, and economic heart of Palestinian society.

The United States and the United Nations have regularly condemned expulsions, and the U.S. State Department said on Mon-

day Israel should seek ways of winning Palestinian trust, not impose new restrictions.

"In general, I would note, as we have in the past, that as a matter of policy Israel should be looking for ways of developing dialogue and trust with the Palestinians, not imposing new restrictions," State Department deputy spokesman Richard Boucher told reporters.

He refused to be more specific. The department had only seen press reports of Sunday's Israeli cabinet decision and would seek more authoritative information through the U.S. embassy in Tel Aviv, Mr. Boucher added.

Some analysts have said the new restrictions could undermine post-Gulf war peace efforts.

"We know the United States in principle does not like expulsions... we don't like expulsions either," said Mr. Olmert.

Israel Radio quoted Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir as

saying the U.S. reaction was hasty and based on inaccurate news reports.

But he did not correct them and appeared to confirm stepped up expulsions, saying they would stop if Palestinian violence ended.

Israeli military officials in the occupied Gaza Strip this week erected a vast wire-mesh pen for Palestinian labourers seeking to cross into Israel, one resident said.

He said Gazans with work permits were now herded into the enclosure — which holds about 5,000 people — to wait until organised transport from their Israeli employers collects them.

The system, like a proposed ban on Palestinians entering Israel in private cars, is aimed at preventing Arabs from moving around unsupervised in Israel

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Shiite shrines at Karbala, Najaf bear battle marks

By Wafa Amr
The Associated Press

KARBALA — A tense atmosphere prevails here and in Najaf nearly two weeks after government put down a rebellion in the two Shiite holy cities.

Parts of Karbala were levelled — houses demolished, government buildings, police and fire stations burned and looted. Schools, hospitals, shops, warehouses, hotels, restaurants were shattered, most sprayed with bullets.

All mosques including the Shiite holy shrines of Imam Hussein and Abbas were damaged by artillery.

Foreign journalists were escorted to Karbala and Najaf by Ministry of Information officials who said the mosques had become places of execution for members of the ruling Baath Party seized by the rebels.

Reports sent to the Associated Press from Nicosia, Cyprus, from Ayatollah Mohammad Taki Modarresi, a Shiite Muslim rebel leader against government headquarters in Karbala.

The statement sent by telex said air raids and tank attacks killed 20,000 people in the last 10 days of the rebellion.

It was the first time in their 1,000-year history that the shrines have become battle grounds. The gold domes of the shrines dominate the skyline of both cities.

Karbala and Najaf are the site of battles in the fight to succeed the Prophet Mohammad in the seventh century that led to the schism in Islam into Shiite and Sunni sects.

The Shiites believed the succession should pass through the family of the Prophet. The tomb of his son-in-law Ali is at Najaf and his grandson Hussein is at Karbala. Abbas was another son of Ali from a wife not related to the Prophet Mohammad.

The Sunni-dominated Iraqi government had recently spent millions of dollars to restore the mosques and rebuild the domes as gesture to the Shiites, who make up a majority in the country.

The main hall of the Hussein mosque was used by the rebels as both a courtroom and a death chamber, officials said. Heavy ropes dangled from the ceiling and dry blood stains covered the ground.

"This room was used by the infiltrators and the mobs to execute residents of Karbala. Many were hanged in this place after they were tried in Hussein mosque next door," said a 21-year-old soldier who said he was a member of the Republican Guards.

One pulpit under the rope was used as the last step before letting victims swing. The soldiers said the mobs hid in the mosques of Hussein and Abbas when the army entered the city.

The main entrance of both mosques was shelled and burned. Soldiers and tanks stood guard at all their entrances.

"They were hiding inside and shooting at us with mortars as we approached the mosques. Some of our soldiers were killed. The entrance to Hussein mosque was slightly damaged. We had to drive them out," said another young soldier standing guard outside.

He said it took the army the entire day of March 14 to regain control of the sites.

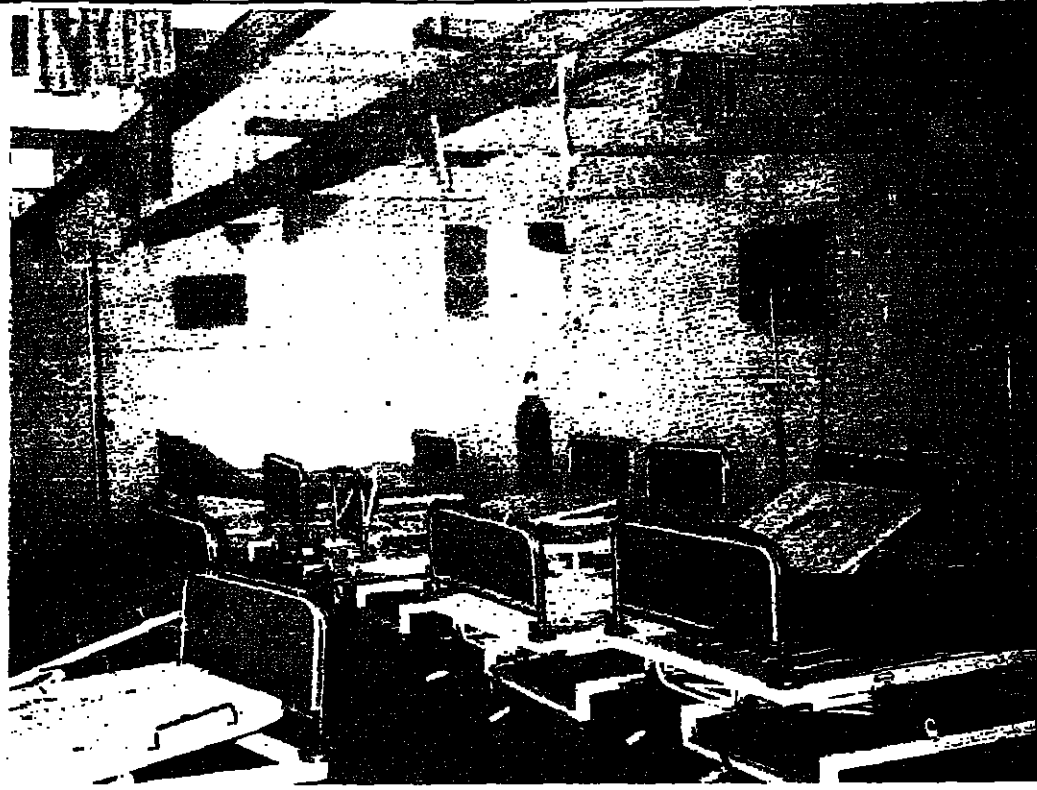
Small rooms inside the mosque were used as prisons, said officials. Bullet holes splattered across the golden domes, the elaborate tile walls and the heavy wooden doors.

Anti-government slogans painted across the walls were covered in paint, replaced by new graffiti in support of the government.

There was less damage in Najaf, 180 kilometres south of Baghdad.

The holy shrine where Imam Ali is buried was partly shelled and burned. The description by residents and soldiers echoed those of the fight for Karbala.

In Karbala, president Saddam's portraits in the streets were holed by cannon shells, but new pictures were already sprouting on shattered government buildings along with slogans like "Long live Saddam." The soldiers said Iraqis,



A hospital which was attacked during the rebellion in Karbala (photo by Mariam Shaheen)

Saudis, Kuwaitis and Egyptians were among those arrested when they took the town.

"Many residents joined the opposition," said one woman covered in black from head to toe as Muslim tradition here dictates. She refused to say more, "I'm afraid to say anything. I don't know what happened," she said, walking away.

The governor of Karbala, Abdul Khalid Aziz, told reporters, "The mobs used manipulation methods to persuade residents to join them. They used

deceptive methods to control the people."

The governor said the rebels were mainly Iranian exiles and escaped criminals. He said they killed hundreds of innocent people during the week they controlled the city. At least 150 were arrested, he said.

About 10 soldiers were killed in the attack, he said.

There was misery in people's eyes, especially those of women shuffling through the streets and the markets. Every time the women were stopped to ask what happened, some

looked sad and walked away, some looked nervous and said they knew nothing, even those who spoke did not want to give any details.

"What can I say? What happened is beyond imagination," said one young woman.

Hamid Habib, 22, was critical of the rebels for being too violent, killing those who refused to join them.

"They come in the name of Islam, but they are far away from Islam," he said.

Abdul Nasser's son acquitted of charges, 15 others convicted

CAIRO (AP) — An Egyptian security court Tuesday acquitted Gamal Abdul Nasser's son of all charges including murder in an alleged 1980s conspiracy that killed two Israelis and injured Israeli and American diplomats.

Of the 19 other suspects tried as members of the Egypt's Revolution group, 15 were convicted. Nine of those were sent to prison for terms up to life, a Khaled Abdul Nasser, whose father was republican Egypt's first president, had been charged as the second-ranking member of the group that claimed four attacks from 1984 to 1987.

Mr. Abdul Nasser's cousin, Gamal Shawki Abdul Nasser, a physician, was convicted of failing to report a gunshot wound he treated on a gunman injured by an American diplomat and was given a six-month suspended sentence.

Mahmoud Nouredin Soleiman, the group's alleged ring-leader, received the stiffest sentence, life imprisonment at hard labour. Under Egyptian law, life in prison means 25 years, with one-fourth off for good behaviour.

The judgment, read at a five-minute session of the three-man supreme state security court, is subject to review by President Hosni Mubarak. He has the power to confirm or commute the sentences or order a new trial.

All 20 defendants stood with blank faces as Presiding Judge Emadaddin Ismail read the judgment. As he finished, Soleiman shouted "Allahu Akbar. We die for Egypt to live."

Mr. Soleiman's wife displayed no emotion. His teen-age daughter wept.

Khaled Abdul Nasser's wife Dalila smiled.

Mr. Soleiman's younger brother Ahmad Essam was sentenced to prison for 15 years at hard labour. He was reported to have been instrumental in cracking the case by approaching the U.S. embassy with disclosures about the group after falling out with his brother. The embassy

passed on the information to Egyptian authorities.

Four other defendants received 15-year prison terms, one got 10 years and two were ordered imprisoned for three years. Prison terms of six months to a year were suspended for six defendants.

The indictment issued in February 1988 charged the defendants with murder, attempted murder and forming a clandestine organisation to kill people. It said their actions undermined Egypt's relations with Israel and the United States.

The group was accused of four shooting attacks in which two Israeli diplomats died and six Israeli and two U.S. diplomats were wounded. One attack occurred in each year from 1984 to 1987.

After each attack, foreign news agencies in Cairo received type-written statements or telephone calls claiming responsibility by Egypt's Revolution.

The statements opposed Egypt's 1979 treaty with Israel, criticised the United States and professed a pan-Arab Nasserite ideology.

At the 26-month trial, which ended last December, the prosecution demanded the death penalty for 11 defendants, including Khaled Abdul Nasser, 41, a professor of engineering at Cairo University.

Abdul Nasser was abroad when the indictment was issued and thus escaped custody. Facing a possible death sentence at home, he gravitated to Yugoslavia to sit out the trial but returned home six months before it ended after family and friends sent envoys to him. He was arrested on arrival in Cairo last June 6, appeared in court the following day and was released on a token bail.

Specific charges against the late president's son were that he was one of three founders of the clandestine group, he financed it with hundreds of thousands of dollars and he supplied it with weapons.

Journalists flee to Turkey from Iraq

ANKARA (R) — At least 28 Western journalists covering the rebellion in northern Iraq have fled into Turkey in the past 24 hours, many of them by swimming across a border river, officials said Tuesday.

Fifteen reporters swam the Hezli River dividing Iraqi and Turkish territory, near the main border crossing of Habur.

"After two journalists ... who swam across, another 13 foreign journalists also came across the river last night," a local official in the town of Silopi told Reuters.

"They are now resting in an official guesthouse. All were very fatigued. We gave them dry clothing, food," he said.

He did not give their names but said a woman was among them. The first two to swim across — a French journalist and a reporter from the U.S. Cable News Network (CNN) — were met by Turkish soldiers and given dry military uniforms to wear, the official said.

A resident of Ova village, on the northern bank of the river, said Monday the first two had crossed despite warning shots from Turkish border guards.

The reporters are fleeing fierce fighting in northern Iraq between Kurdish rebels and government troops. Another is journalists who walked into Turkey from near the town of Semdinli in the southeastern Hakkari province on Monday were to be taken to the northern city of Van Tuesday, an official in Hakkari said.

They used the same route as some 7,200 Iraqis who have fled to Turkey since the start of the Gulf crisis, he said.

"All are in good health. They spent the night in Semdinli and will be taken by bus to Van. I am sure they have all contacted their papers or agencies," he said, adding that their names were not available.

Afghan government acknowledges loss of Khost, mourns those killed

ISLAMABAD (AP) — In a rare acknowledgement, Afghan President Najibullah said Monday government forces had lost the southern town of Khost. He declared Tuesday a day of mourning for soldiers killed in the battle.

"Today in the morning our links with Khost were cut and many of our brave sons received martyrdom. Therefore, I declare tomorrow as a national day of mourning," President Najibullah said in a Kabul Radio newscast, monitored in New Delhi.

The U.S.-backed Mujahadeen, or Islamic holy warriors, seized Khost, located 30 kilometres from the Pakistan border, on Monday after a 17-day battle with government forces.

"This is definitely a major victory for the Mujahadeen," a U.S. State Department official told the New York Times. He said Khost

guards the major supply routes connecting the capital of Kabul with the southwestern provinces.

But one Western diplomat, speaking on condition of anonymity, said, "The Mujahadeen can capture Kandahar, Kunduz, Herat, Jalalabad and every other major city in Afghanistan and it will mean very little. They still won't hold Kabul and those who control Kabul control Afghanistan."

"We are quite sure Afghans fighting their (Khost) will continue to struggle with the last drop of their blood," President Najibullah said Monday night on state-run radio and television. "God bless the martyred of Khost."

He blamed deep snows and the resulting bad road conditions for the loss, and accused neighbouring Pakistan of directly helping

the rebels. Pakistan is base for the rebel group, which has been trying to overthrow successive Communist-style Afghan governments for nearly 13 years.

Diplomatic and guerrilla sources in Pakistan said as many as 2,000 soldiers were captured and 1,000 defeated during the battle over Khost, a deserted garrison town, with symbolic rather than strategic importance.

Diplomatic sources in Islamabad said the guerrillas' backers were pressing to get International Committee of the Red Cross representatives into Khost within 24 hours to prevent feared mass executions of government troops.

Jalaluddin Haqqani, the key rebel commander around Khost, has conducted some of the most brutal massacres of government soldiers since the Soviet Union withdrew its soldiers in February 1989.

'Hostage issue deadlocked'

BEIRUT (R) — A senior pro-Iranian Lebanese fundamentalist leader said Tuesday the issue of 12 Western hostages in Lebanon was deadlocked despite a flurry of diplomatic activity and reports of an imminent release.

There was no comment from pro-Iranian sources on Tehran's release of British businessman Roger Cooper Tuesday after more than five years in prison for alleged spying.

Fundamentalists said earlier his fate was not linked to the hostages in Lebanon. They had expected Mr. Cooper to be freed after Britain last month deported Iranian student Mehdi Kowkabi.

Mr. Kowkabi was held by British police for 15 months after being accused of a firebomb attack on a shop selling Salman Rushdie's novel "The Satanic Verses."

The sources said his deportation and Mr. Cooper's release would help clear relations between Lebanon and Tehran but would not directly affect Western hostages held in Lebanon.

"Despite all the fuss by West-

ern diplomats and the press, the hostage issue is at a standstill," said the fundamentalist leader, who spoke to Reuters on condition of anonymity.

Most of the 12 Westerners missing in Lebanon are believed held by pro-Iranian groups linked to Hizbollah (Party of God), which denies any involvement in hostage-taking. They are six Americans, three Britons, two Germans and an Italian.

Diplomats and Beirut newspaper reports last month said they could be released soon after new Gulf crisis alignments between Washington and London and their former foes Syria and Iran.

But the pro-Iranian source said: "There is nothing moving in the U.S.-Iranian ties. Tehran has a fixed policy and is not willing to give away anything to the Americans."

Britain welcomed Mr. Cooper's release but said the hostages in Lebanon blocked opening a new chapter in relations with Iran.

The fundamentalist leader said mistrust between Tehran and

Washington was a major hurdle to better relations. "America is the one that should present proof and a sign of goodwill to boost confidence," he said without elaborating.

The Lebanese source said a visit to Iran by Italian Foreign Minister Gianni de Michelis last week covered the problem of the hostages in Lebanon. But he ruled out a breakthrough soon.

An Italian diplomat in Damascus said Sunday Mr. de Michelis was told by Iranian leaders the hostages would be freed shortly.

"Iranians are very patient politicians. They take their time when changing policies or reversing a decision, such as the hostage issue," the fundamentalist leader said.

Asked about several reports by pro-Syrian sources in Beirut that the Western hostages would soon go free, the source said:

"Syria is sincere in securing the release of the hostages. By fueling speculation, it hopes to exert pressure on Iran to work for freeing a hostage."

Asked whether it would work, he smiled and said, "No."

Flow of Soviet emigres to Israel picks up pace

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Some 13,000 Soviet Jews arrived in Israel in March, almost double February's immigration rate, officials said Monday.

The Gulf war had drastically reduced the pace of the immigration, with February's rate of 7,100 only a fifth of December's figure.

Gad Ben Ari, spokesman for the Jewish Agency, a quasi-governmental body that helps transport immigrants to Israel and aids in their absorption, said the number of Soviet Jewish immigrants is now expected to grow monthly.

Some 230,000 Soviet Jews have immigrated to Israel since mid-1989 and the government has not yet created the housing or jobs to accommodate them.

Immigration officials fear that "if the government does not take absorption more seriously and does not concentrate to solve housing and employment problems this may have a serious effect on future immigration," Mr. Ben Ari said.

Simcha Dinitz, head of the

agency, said in a statement that many potential immigrants are worried about unemployment. Mr. Dinitz predicted acute problems for immigrant families entering their second year in Israel when government subsidies are cut.

A family of three receives approximately 17,500 shekels (\$8,750) for their first year in Israel, but the sum is greatly reduced in the second year, when the immigrants are expected to have found jobs.

Mr. Ben Ari said the reports of absorption hardships had not yet deterred Soviet Jews from coming to Israel.

Many would-be Soviet emigrants delayed their departure during the war when Israel was facing Iraqi missile attacks.

About 200,000 immigrants arrived in Israel last year and the government expects the influx of Soviet Jews arriving under Kramlik emigration reforms to reach one million by 1993, boosting Israel's population by a fifth.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Scowcroft met secretly with King Fahd

WASHINGTON (R) — U.S. National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft travelled secretly to Saudi Arabia last week where he met Saudi King Fahd and discussed the Middle East peace process, White House officials said Monday. The officials did not disclose specifically what topics were discussed or whether Mr. Scowcroft made any additional stops during the two-day trip. From the end of the Gulf war, President George Bush's administration has been engaged in energetic diplomacy to forge new "security" arrangements in the Middle East. The White House also disclosed that President Bush sent a letter to the emir of Kuwait discussing the political and economic challenges now facing the emirate. Mr. Bush was responding to a note he received last month from the emir thanking him for the U.S.-led war effort, said a source who asked to remain unidentified. White House spokesman Stephen Hart confirmed that messages were exchanged, but declined to discuss their contents.

Qatari emir thanks U.S. general

BAHRAIN (R) — Qatari Emir Sheikh Khalifa Ben Hamad Al Thani has congratulated allied forces commander General Norman Schwarzkopf for freeing Kuwait from Iraqi occupation and awarded him Qatar's highest decoration. "Operation Desert Storm" will be remembered in history as a landmark for deepening the principles of new international order based on rejection of aggression and hegemony," the Gulf News Agency Tuesday quoted the emir as saying. The agency said Sheikh Khalifa was speaking after receiving Gen. Schwarzkopf, who arrived in Doha Monday for a two-day visit. Sheikh Khalifa awarded Gen. Schwarzkopf Qatar's highest decoration, the Sash of Independence, for his role in leading the six-week war.

Moroccan police release Muslim activists

RABAT (R) — Eight young members of the banned Moroccan Muslim fundamentalist group Al Adl Wal Ihsane were released without charge by police Tuesday after two nights in custody, a spokesman for the group said. He said they were interrogated about conversations they had with groups of people outside mosques in Rabat and the neighbouring town of Sale Sunday after evening prayers. The spokesman said one of the group, engineer Jilali Malki, was beaten up in custody. The others included six students in their late teens and early 20s and a workman. They were the first arrests of Muslim activists for just over a year since Al Adl Wal Ihsane was outlawed by the authorities. The group's founder Abdessalam Yassine has been under house arrest at his home in Sale since December 1989 and six of its leaders were jailed for two years each in February last year for belonging to an illegal organisation.

Algeria passes new electoral law

ALGIERS (R) — Algeria's parliament has passed a controversial electoral law governing the country's first multi-party elections which are due to be held in late June or early July. The draft had been criticised by many of the 42 political parties created after President Chadli Benjedid began a process of political liberalisation in 1989 and ended over two decades of one-party rule under the National Liberation Front (FLN). The National Assembly, dominated by the FLN, approved the draft with little change by 232 votes, with nine against and 24 abstentions. The law provides for a two-stage voting system. If no candidate obtains a clear majority, a second poll will be held three weeks later for the front runners. It also bans campaigning in mosques. Muslim fundamentalists have been the main critics of the new law saying it favours the ruling FLN and secular parties.

Libya gives Chad \$3 million

TUNIS (R) — Libya has given Chad \$3 million in aid and will send urgently needed food to the east and north of its southern neighbour, the official Libyan news agency IANA said Tuesday. The secretary of Libya's Foreign Liaison Bureau (foreign minister), Ibrahim Beshari, handed over a cheque for the amount during a visit to Chad last week, it said. It will support the Chad government's general budget, it added. Libya has good relations with the new Chadian government led by President Idriss Deby, who ousted Hissene Habre in December.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

PRAYER TIMES

05:59 Fajr
05:15 (Sunrise) Duha
11:39 Dhuhur
15:15 'Asr
18:40 Maghrib
19:19 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swarthel, Tel. 810740
Assembly of God Church, Tel. 637285
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terzianita Church Tel. 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel.

628543.
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 711331.
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261.
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.
Armenian International Church Tel. 685326.
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295.
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 815817, 654932.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

The country will be under the effect of a cold front on Wednesday. Therefore, temperatures will drop, clouds will increase and there will be a chance for scattered showers of rain. Winds

will be westerly moderate. In Aqaba, it will be partly cloudy with southerly fresh winds and high seas.

Min./max. temp.
Amman 12 / 20
Aqaba 16 / 28
Desert 12 / 21
Jordan Valley 15 / 24

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 28, Aqaba 31. Humidity readings: Amman 37 per cent, Aqaba 24 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Salman Al Daboubi 776751

Dr. Khalil Abdul Qader 795392
Dr. Amwar Al Haj 771020
Dr. Youssef Al Faghi 657909
First Pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asena pharmacy 637055
Naioukh pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yaerub pharmacy 644945
Shameen pharmacy 637660

IBRD:
Dr. Ali Al Shuqairi (—)
Al Shuqairi pharmacy (275825)

ZARQA:
Dr. Hisham Al Sharbani (—)
Khalil pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Emergency 630341
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891238
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 63021
Hotel Complaints 603800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Amman Municipality 787111
Complaints (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Repairs 661101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 63101
Jordan Television 731111

Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power 602240/50
Amal Hospital 636381
ZARQA:
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Int. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn. 642816
Al-Khid Maternity, J. Amn. 642412
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shamsan 664171/4
Shamsan Hospital 669131
University Hospital 843045
Al-Manshar Hospital 667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali 666127/37

Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajira 771013
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 771126
Army, Marha 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50
Amal Hospital 636381
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983322
Zarqa National Hospital (09)991071
Jbn Sina Hospital (09)986732
IBRD:
Princess Beana Hospital (02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272275
Jbn Al Nafes Hospital (02)247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in Jls per kg.

Apple 1200 / 1000
Banana 500 / 450
Banana (Mukannam) 450 / 400

Beans 850 / 750
Cabbage 140 / 100
Carrot 200 / 150
Cauliflower 170 / 120
Cucumbers (large) 250 / 200
Cucumbers (small) 400 / 350
Dates 300 / 250
Eggplant 1000 / 750
Garlic 600 / 500
Grapefruit 250 / 200
Lemon 220 / 200
Lettuce (per one) 150 / 100
Marrow (large) 250 / 200
Marrow (small) 450 / 400
Onion (dry) 300 / 250
Onion (green) 140 / 100
Orange 350 / 250
Pepper (hot) 650 / 550
Pepper (sweet) 250 / 200
Potato 150 / 100
Sage 400 / 300
Spinach 130 / 80
Tomatoes 350 / 300

Libya ready to absorb Jordanian products, boost trade cooperation

By Ziyad Al Shilleh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The head of a Libyan economic and trade team now on a visit to Jordan Tuesday welcomed further strengthening of ties between the two countries, and said that Libyan markets were open to Jordanian products of all types.

"The Libyan markets can buy all Arab industrial commodities in general and Jordanian products in particular as Libya gives preference to Arab products over foreign goods," Saleh Al Sheikh said at a meeting held at the Amman Chamber of Commerce.

"Libya offers the Jordanian private sector the chance to market its products in the country, either under official protocols or

through private means, provided that the quality is high and the prices are reasonable for the Libyan consumer," said Mr. Sheikh in his statement.

He said that Libya believed in economic integration with the Arab countries and offered facilities to reach that end.

Mr. Sheikh and his accompanying team, who had talks with Ministry of Industry and Trade Secretary-General Ibrahim Badran, Monday discussed with the Amman Chamber of Commerce means of promoting bilateral trade.

Haidar Murad, the chamber's vice-president, welcomed the Libyan visitors and urged them to acquaint themselves with Jordanian products that can be marketed in Libya.

Mr. Murad said that trade with Libya boomed in the early 1980s when the Libyan markets started buying Jordanian medicine, agricultural seeds, confectionaries, wood and metal products. Libya has been selling Jordanian fertilisers in the 1980s, he said.

But on the whole, the volume of trade exchanges did not top the JD 5 million mark on an annual basis and for this reason efforts are being made to boost trade. This, he said, can be done through organising joint trade fairs, exchanges of visits by trade delegations, and the signing of new agreements to organise the process of trade between Tripoli and Amman.

Several chamber members addressed the meeting, pledging to do all they can to promote bilateral trade.

Relief convoy leaves for Iraq

AMMAN (AP) — Trucks laden with food and medical supplies continued to roll towards Baghdad on Tuesday to help relieve the suffering of Iraqis in their war-ravaged country.

The International Committee of the Red Cross said a 13-truck convoy departed on the 9th relief mission to Baghdad since the outbreak of the Gulf war Jan. 17. ICRC spokesman, Michel Schroeder, said the convoy included 10 trucks each loaded with 27 tonnes of wheat flour and another three trucks loaded with a total of 31 tonnes of food, medical supplies, water filters, blankets and generators.

The ICRC shipment was the third since the United Nations Security Council lifted restrictions on essential goods to Iraq on March 22.

Prior to that date all relief shipments, except those for humanitarian aid, had been barred under a U.N. embargo imposed last year to punish Iraq for its Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait.

Islamic academy prepares for conference on developing human resources in science, technology

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Islamic Academy of Sciences (IAS) is preparing for a general conference to be held in Amman in December, and has prepared a draft resolution to be adopted by a group of scholars and specialists representing various Islamic nations.

The academy's Executive Director-General Anwar Bilbeisi said in a statement Tuesday that a total of 17 working papers submitted by a group of scholars would be reviewed at the conference to be held under the slogan of developing human resources in the fields of science and technology to serve the Islamic world.

"The conference's Preparatory Committee which is making arrangements for the conference to be held under the patronage of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, groups representatives from Turkey, Jordan and Saudi Arabia," Dr. Bilbeisi said.

Dr. Bilbeisi said that the IAS was created at a meeting held in Amman in 1986 upon recommendations by the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) as an independent, non-governmental organisation aiming

at promoting science and technology in the Islamic World.

He said that the Amman-based IAS was governed by an executive committee chaired by Dr. Mumtaz Qazi of Pakistan, and groups members representing Jordan, Turkey, Egypt, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Bangladesh, Indonesia and Senegal.

The coming conference in Amman is expected to recommend measures to help Islamic countries speed up their national and joint projects related to science and technology.

According to Dr. Bilbeisi, the IAS has so far held four conferences. The first was in 1987, in Amman, on food security, the second in Islamabad on science and technology policies in Islamic nations, the third in Kuwait on new technologies to develop the Islamic World, and the fourth was in Turkey, in 1990, under the slogan of modern technology for the development of Islamic countries.

Dr. Bilbeisi said that more than 250 scholars and researchers from Arab and Islamic countries and organisations around the world had taken part in those conferences.

Media focus on Jordan ebbs

By Maha Addasi
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Walking into the lobby of Jordan's five-star hotels shortly after the outbreak of the Gulf crisis on Aug. 2, one used to encounter large groups of journalists, either leaving or returning to the premises at any given time. Today, the same lobbies look deserted in comparison.

Immediately after Iraq invaded Kuwait, journalists from all over the world rushed into Jordan to report on the events in the Gulf, said Ismat Abu Salem, an official at the Information Centre at the Intercontinental Hotel. "A total of 1,460 people in the journalism profession visited Jordan since Aug. 2 to cover the events in the Gulf," Abu Salem added. "This number accounts for photographers and reporters from news and television networks, magazines, radio agencies and newspapers from all over the world."

Today less than 100 foreign journalists remain in Jordan. Many journalists have left for home, Syria, Turkey, Kuwait, and most recently to Iraq.

Now that the Gulf war is over, news networks have different plans to cover the aftermath of the conflict. American Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) television, for one, plans to stay in Jordan for another two months only to see what new developments will take place in the region.

Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen (ZDF), the largest German television channel is waiting to get into Baghdad. ZDF did not set up

an office in Jordan but after Aug. 2 it employed local people to work for them.

The European Broadcasting Union (EBU) has an office here. EBU is also planning to get into Baghdad.

Visnews plans to stay on in Jordan for another six months. TF 1, a French channel, left Amman for Baghdad to cover the developments after the Gulf war.

A group of Italian journalists are renting an apartment on a monthly basis. Although they are back in Rome now, they will continue renting the apartment in case they have to set up an office in Jordan at short notice.

According to the representative of Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) television's Liaison Office in Amman Amjad Tadros, CBS is waiting to see whether there are any changes in the Gulf situation. "We are always on alert," he said. "Any developments in the region will mean we will have to set up a reporting base once again."

The foreign media poured into Jordan for many reasons.

Mr. Tadros said that journalists were able to get a clear "Arab reaction" by talking to the people in Jordan. He added that because of the democratic atmosphere and good facilities in Jordan journalists were able to do their work better. "Because of the free media, and the availability of satellite dishes in Jordan, reporting was made easier."

A freelance reporter, Andrea Shoenhuber, who works for Der Morgen, one of the largest daily newspapers in former East Berlin, and also a freelance reporter

for RUFA, a radio agency that sells reports to private radio stations in Germany, said that the reason she chose to come to Jordan was the country's several borders.

If there are any developments in the countries surrounding Jordan, it is reasonably easy to go to that country and report," Ms. Shoenhuber said.

According to Ms. Shoenhuber, who plans to stay on in Jordan for another year, the best way to describe the Jordanian media is "free expression and no suppression."

It is also a fact that during the first weeks of the war the only gateway to Iraq was through Jordan and that attracted many journalists.

To the observant eye, it was obvious that all the famous names in journalism came to Jordan at least once after Aug. 2. Peter Arnett, the correspondent for CNN made famous for his covering of the war in Iraq, was among those who went to and from Baghdad through Jordan. Dan Rather, Tom Brokaw and Peter Jennings, Barbara Walters, anchormen of CBS' NBC' (National Broadcasting Corporation) and ABC' main news broadcasts also made it here among many other media celebrities.

Many adjustments were made in Jordan after Aug. 2 to accommodate the needs of the foreign journalists.

Throughout the Gulf crisis there was a growing need for translators; so many multilingual tour guides worked as translators for news agencies.

Government allocates JD 1m to repair devastated south

Rawabdeh briefs Cabinet on situation in the south

AMMAN (J.T.) — The government Tuesday announced the allocation of JD 1 million to cover the cost of repairs on roads, bridges and retaining walls as well as irrigation canals in the governorates of Tafleh, Karak and Maan, hit by the recent rainstorms which caused wide scale devastation to public and private property.

The announcement came at a Cabinet session chaired by Prime Minister Mudar Badran during which Minister of Public Works and Housing Abdul Raouf Al Rawabdeh reported on the general situation in the southern regions in the wake of the storm.

Mr. Rawabdeh, who toured the affected regions together with local officials, briefed the Council of Ministers on the nature of work being conducted to restore life to the three regions.

He said that the governors of the three areas were taking direct control of the teams dispatched by the ministries of agriculture, public works and housing and water and irrigation, and coordinating their efforts with the teams from the Arab Potash Company (APC) and the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company (JPMC).

According to a Cabinet state-

ment, the JD 1 million allocation will also be used to remove rocks and earth covering the farmlands and to clear roadside canals and remove tonnes of mud from water springs.

The statement said that the JD 1 million would be spent only on those regions within the boundaries of municipalities, but the government still awaits reports about damages affecting other areas in the three governorates before taking decisions on them.

The Cabinet session coincided with a general meeting held in Karak and attended by Parliament members representing the constituencies of southern Jordan as well as mayors, government officials and local inhabitants and farmers.

The Parliament members demanded that the government pay compensation to the local inhabitants who suffered losses as a result of the storm and that the concerned authorities offer technical and in-kind assistance to the local farmers so that they can resume their normal life.

Addressing the general meeting in Karak, the deputies also called on the authorities involved in the repair plans to give priority

to agricultural roads and irrigation canals.

The Parliament members promised to submit detailed reports about the general situation in the three governorates to the government demanding that sufficient funds be allocated and more machinery be made available to speed up the repair work in various areas.

The deputies urged the private and public sectors to cooperation in the process of restoring normal life to the region.

Several local inhabitants addressed the meeting outlining the various damages inflicted on their property and demanding that the government offer them assistance.

Eid Qatarnah, Karak governor, presented a general outline about the damages and the losses resulting from the recent storm, and said that a plan had been worked out and put into force to speed up repairs. He also said that several committees had been formed to conduct an estimate of the damages.

According to Mr. Qatarnah, teams from the ministries of public works and housing, agriculture, water and irrigation as well

as the Arab Potash Company, the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company and the various local councils had been participating in the implementation of the plan.

Addressing the meeting were also heads of departments of agriculture, water and Public Works, presenting reports about the work so far carried out.

At the end of the meeting it was announced that a comprehensive plan was worked out to speed up the ongoing efforts to repair the damages.

The government had entrusted Minister of Public Works and Housing Abdul Raouf Al Rawabdeh to visit the areas and to compile a detailed report to be submitted to the Council of Ministers.

For its part, the Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA) said Tuesday that its technical teams had completed repair work at all

the new networks within the Karak Governorate, the worst area to be hit by the storm.

JEA Director General Mohammad Saeed Arafah made the announcement in Karak following a tour of the affected areas where, he said, power supply is now reaching all subscribers.

Ministry of Public Works Secretary-General Rashdan Al Rashdan Tuesday visited Tafleh region and inspected repair work on roads, bridges and retaining walls while a committee representing the Agricultural Credit Corporation (ACC) has embarked on a survey within the Tafleh district areas to determine the extent of damages to projects partly or wholly financed by the ACC.

The ACC had said that it would be willing to reschedule farmers' debts and to offer them new loans on easy terms.

No water, no energy in land of 'milk and honey'

By Mariam M. Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

BAGHDAD — For the peoples of the 40 or 50 countries that went to war against Iraq Jan. 17 the war has ended, but for Iraqis, in many ways, the war has just begun.

Baghdad hospitals are in a bad state. They only operate through the use of old electricity generators. Most women, as in the days of the war, deliver their children at home because they cannot make it to the hospitals for lack of transport.

Most hospitals are confined to treating emergencies and patients at home, said Dr. Boghos Boghossian, head of the Surgery Department at Baghdad's second largest hospital, Al Yarmouk.

"Many people who require surgery are not receiving it because of lack of necessary medications to carry through the treatment," said Boghossian.

The atmosphere in this 700-bed hospital is calm, and patients and doctors alike seem to have accepted, for the moment, their fate of being kept in the dark. The staff rotate in two to three-day shifts because of the transportation problem.

Every doctor's clinic has a bed and a cauldron. Water is still brought in by tanks and until the country's infrastructure is repaired or rebuilt there seems to be no hope that running water and constant electricity could be made available for patients and staff as well.

Foreign relief workers report that in most hospitals there is not enough water to clean the sheets and the fabric bandages.

"This will cause infection and possibly further diseases," said one Scottish relief worker.

Water is still down from 250 litres per head per day to 25 litres. Extra water needed for sick people is "not available" and patients with burns in particular have suffered from the lack of water necessary for their cure.

"Many of the victims of war we treated were burn victims. Part of their cure is to immerse them in water; that, of course was impossible," said Dr. Boghossian.

While epidemics did not break out yet, with the warming of the weather a catastrophe seems to be around the corner and with all the strength they can still muster, Iraqi medical staff are bracing themselves for the worse.

During the war, Dr. Boghossian remembers, medical staff dreaded the possibility of total collapse of the medical system, "and now we face yet another inhuman challenge."

"One must not forget that every doctor and nurse was thinking not only of their patients but of their own families as they heard the bombardments night after night, it was a nightmare," Dr. Boghossian says recalling the atmosphere during the war.

After the bombing of the Amriyeh shelter in Baghdad, the fear that such an incident would occur again was great, doctor Sabah Anai at the Yarmouk Hospital said.

"We prepared the emergency rooms for burn victims as best as we could as soon as we heard that a shelter had been hit," he said. "A lorry arrived at the hospital," Dr. Boghossian recalls. "We looked inside and suddenly there

was total silence. Children, young girls, and old men, eight in all. These charred people were the only survivors," he said.

Although officials have estimated that 800 people died in the shelter, doctors estimate that most shelters could house anywhere from 2,000-3,000 people.

The number of war victims treated at the Yarmouk Hospital were around 600; at Saddam General Hospital, in the Baghdad suburb of Saddam City, the number was 400, but no-one can give any figures of how many war victims were treated in all.

"People can hardly get to work, let alone find the fuel to drive around and ask each hospital how many people died or how many were treated. That may come later, but now there are other priorities," said a doctor at Saddam General hospital.

Many residents of Baghdad are suffering from stress-related illnesses which medical staff have not had time to begin to address, doctors here say.

"The kinds of side effects the bombings had will ultimately kill more people than the actual bombings," said one doctor.

Dr. Boghossian is amazed at the "overapplication" of the U.N.-sponsored economic sanctions which left medical supplies, ordered and paid for long before Aug. 2, stranded on the Turkish-Iraqi border.

The general paralysis of the country, Dr. Boghossian says, has rendered the medical sector impotent as well and all changes now depend, he says, on the resumption of oil exports. In his words "there is oil everywhere and not a drop to use."

Jordan to get £5m British aid

AMMAN (J.T.) — Britain's bilateral aid to Jordan this year will amount to £5 million. Priority is being given to projects in the water sector, top of the list being the Qa Disi water resources study.

United Kingdom (U.K.) consultant Scott Wilson Kirkpatrick in association with Haiste International have been appointed to undertake the study in cooperation with the Water Authority of Jordan (WAJ).

An exchange of notes between the Jordan and British governments is expected to take place soon. As part of the project Britain will be providing a drilling rig together with other equipment.

Construction of a new central workshop to maintain and repair equipment and vehicles belonging to WAJ is also planned for this year. A "twinning arrangement" between WAJ and a U.K. Water Authority is also due to start during 1991.

The foregoing projects will result in a number of technical co-operation experts undertaking short and long term assignments in Jordan. In addition over thirty Jordanians are being given the opportunity to study in the U.K.

under the technical co-operation training programme.

Britain's Overseas aid budget is set to increase to £1,720 million in 1991/92. Priority areas will be programmes for economic reform, the alleviation of poverty, and the environment. Some 60 per cent of Britain's aid is bilateral, the major part of which goes to the poorest countries. The balance of Britain's Overseas aid goes to multilateral agencies, particularly the European Community (EC), who will be providing £60 million special assistance in 1991/92 to Jordan, Egypt and Turkey.

ESCWA head leaves for Baghdad

AMMAN (J.T.) — Executive Director of the U.N. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) Dr. Tayseer Abdul Jabbar left Amman for Baghdad Tuesday to discuss the prospect of ESCWA's contribution towards the reconstruction of Iraq in the aftermath of the Gulf war.

Dr. Abdul Jabbar said that he would spend seven days in Baghdad and other areas discussing with officials and concerned authorities the nature of ESCWA's

participation in rebuilding destroyed areas and infrastructure.

ESCWA's head office is located in Baghdad, but a temporary head office was opened in Amman in October last year following Iraq's takeover of Kuwait. Dr. Abdul Jabbar said that ESCWA would organise conferences and meetings in Amman aimed at promoting development in Arab countries located in Western Asia.

In 1989, ESCWA signed with the Jordanian government three

agreements to pave the ground for cooperation with regional organisations in promoting agrarian reform and rural development in the country.

Dr. Abdul Jabbar said that the Western Asia region had always received U.N. attention because the organisation had invariably carried out essential tasks supporting peace-keeping efforts and the economic and social development process in the countries of the Western Asia region.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Prince Mohammad visits army

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad, the personal representative of His Majesty King Hussein, Tuesday paid a visit to the Armed Forces headquarters where he met for a while with Chief of Staff General Fathi Abu Taleb, and discussed with him issues of interest to the Armed Forces.

IDB approves loan to industries

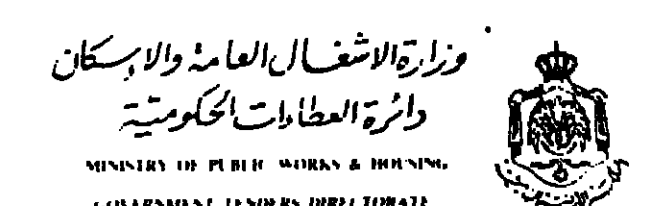
AMMAN (Petra) — The Industrial Development Bank (IDB) has approved JD 1.291 million in loans to eight industries in Jordan. Since the start of 1991, IDB has granted 18 loans worth JD 2.232 million to industrial projects.

Illegal home-setters

ZARQA (Petra) — Zarqa Governor Mohamed Shobaki announced Tuesday that a growing number of people have been caught setting up homes illegally on state-owned land. These buildings were found to have collapsed soon after their construction as they had been set up hurriedly and without solid foundation during the holidays and weekends. The governor said that such practice was not only illegal, but was bound to create disasters to those who undertake them.

Seminar held at JUST

RAMTHA (Petra) — A seminar on university students' experiments in Sudan, Tunisia, Syria, Eritrea, and Jordan was held at the Jordan University of Science and Technology Tuesday (JUST).



Central Tenders Announcement Ministry of Public Works and Housing Government Tenders Directorate For Tender No. (21/91) Zara - Ghor Haditha Road Project Retendering announcement

Local contractors classified in the field of Road Construction Classification Grade "A" or Arab contractors, and foreign contractors having projects in Jordan in joint ventures with local or Arab contractors are invited to participate in the following tender, are requested to purchase tender documents from the Government Tenders Directorate/Ministry of Public Works & Housing, starting on April 3, 1991, according to the following:

— The Project is partially financed by the Saudi Fund for Development and the Arab Fund for Economical and Social Development.

1. Project Description:

The Project is a 32-kilometre two-lane main road linking Ghor Haditha with Zara, along the Eastern coast of the Dead Sea, and comprises two sections:

Section "A"

Between the Project 0 + 00 station at Ghor Haditha and km 16 + 500, mainly comprising the execution of 100,000 cubic metres excavation out of which 93,000 cubic metres to be used for fill; the works also comprise 170,000 cubic metres of borrowed fill, 70,000 cubic metres of base, 19,000 cubic metres of bituminous concrete pavement and 5,000 cubic metres of concrete for culverts and protection works in addition to other miscellaneous works as detailed in the tender documents.

Section "B"

Between km 16 + 500 and the end of the project at km 31 + 540, near Zara village, mainly comprising the execution of 1.1 million cubic metres of excavations, out of which 560,000 cubic metres to be used for fill. The works also comprise 93,000 cubic metres of base, 18,000 cubic metres of bituminous concrete and 17,000 cubic metres of concrete for culverts, retaining walls and protection works, in addition to other miscellaneous works as detailed in the tender documents.

2. Contractor's Post Qualification:

First grade roads local contractors, Arab and foreign companies and joint ventures bidding for the Project will be qualified according to their technical and financial ability, experience in highway and bridges construction, size of workload and level of previous performance.

3. Submittal and Evaluation of Offers:

a) Bidders must submit their offers in two separate envelopes; one marked "Technical Proposal", comprising the qualification data, and the other marked "Financial Proposal", for the different tender alternatives and choices.

b) A number of contractors will be qualified for the Project, based on their technical proposal. The financial proposals of the qualified bidders will be opened, the rest of the financial proposals will be returned unopened.

4. Alternatives & Choices:

The contract's B.O.O. comprises three separate bills for Section "A" Section "B" and Sections "A & B". Bidders should submit a bid price and complete all three tender B.O.O.s for two execution alternatives for completion of the works:

- Using the existing on site previous contractor's (TLE) forfeited equipment.
 - Without using the existing on-site mobile equipment. In both alternatives certain stationed equipment and preparation works shall be used. All as detailed in the tender documents and the relevant Appendix.
- The Central Tenders Committee reserves the right in awarding the Project for one or two contractors, choosing of the two execution alternatives.
 - Cost of the tender documents is a non-refundable sum of JD 500 for the first copy and JD 150 for any extra copy.
 - Work load will be considered in awarding.
 - Last date for purchase of tender documents is 25 April, 1991.
 - Financial offers shall be submitted to Government Tenders Directorate before 13.30 local time on Sat. 11 May 1991.

Chairman, Central Tender Committee.
Director, Government Tenders Directorate

Jordan Times

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Myopia won't do

MR. ABDULLAH Bishara, the Gulf Cooperation Council's (GCC) secretary general seems to be a confused man these days. One day he says the GCC has decided to cut financial aid to Jordan and the PLO, and the next he says there has been no such decision. Just what is his bottom line? Are Mr. Bishara and his colleagues in the GCC still determined to punish Jordan and the PLO, i.e. the Jordanian and the Palestinian peoples, for their sympathy towards their Iraqi brothers during the Gulf crisis and the war that followed? Is it possible that some Arabs can be so vengeful against other Arabs, even when foreigners are trying to forgive and forget? It was unfortunate that Iraq, in the minds of many Arabs the champion of Arab nationalism, had to invade Kuwait. For though every Arab would love to see the Arab Nation united, not least the Kuwaitis themselves, no Arab, Jordanian or Palestinian, approved of the Iraqi occupation and annexation of Kuwait. Jordan has said time and again it was no apologist for Iraq. Throughout the crisis we constantly called for a peaceful solution to the problem, insisted on the unacceptability of foreign intervention in internal Arab affairs, even though we made it clear that the Kuwaiti government's intransigent stand prior to Aug. 2 contributed greatly to the calamity that followed. Jordan, right from the beginning, advocated an Arab solution. And we think we have been proven right. The escalation of the conflict and its internationalisation has resulted in the destruction of both Iraq and Kuwait and in opening deep wounds in the Arab body and soul that will take a long time to heal.

Jordan's was a principled stand. We were never for sale. And we think we always deserved Arab aid for any number of reasons. For one thing Jordan was and still is the foremost Arab confrontation state with Israel; for another, it housed most of the Palestinian refugees; moreover, our brothers in the Gulf may remember that Jordanians and Palestinians provided the Gulf states with most of the skilled labour that built their infrastructure in the past three decades. Jordan even did more. It trained and managed the Gulf armed forces and fought on their side in their local wars. If there was any animosity in the hearts of Palestinians or Jordanians towards their fellow Gulf Arabs, it must have come about as a result of the attitude of people like Mr. Bishara who always gave aid with much high-handedness. And if Mr. Bishara and his associates in the GCC are going to persist in their vengeance they will only encounter more animosity and resentment. The secretary general must by now know that Palestinians and Jordanians are among the Arabs' most resourceful people. They are well capable of readjusting and managing without "brother Arab" hand-outs. Mr. Bishara is well advised to look deeper into and to reflect more on not only the resentment that surfaced during the Gulf crisis but on its causes as well. But judging from his and his colleagues' rhetoric, it seems they cannot see beyond their nose.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

The threats directed against Jordan and the Palestinians by the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) can by no means reflect power or strength, but rather is an expression of real horror in the hearts of feeble people who betrayed their nation, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily Tuesday. The paper said that the threats were met with ridicule on the part of the Arab masses in Jordan and Palestine, because they can frigate no one. Suspending aid to the Jordanians and the Palestinians did not cause any surprise to us because we are not part of the allied forces hostile to Iraq and the Arab Nation, and therefore we have no right to ask for the price of conspiring against our nation as some Arabs did, the paper noted. It said that the Palestinians and Jordanians used to get financial assistance from the GCC countries not because they betrayed their nation, but because they deserved assistance for their steadfastness in the face of the Zionist enemy. The Palestinians and Jordanians used to get the assistance from the GCC countries in implementation of Arab summit resolutions, and it was a duty which the GCC did as long as they belonged to the Arab Nation, the paper added. However, it said, the decision to suspend aid to Jordan and the Palestinians is in the hands of the Arab masses in the Gulf, and not in the hands of the those leaders who betrayed their country and nation, and those who escaped punishment at the start of the crisis only to return under the protection of colonial forces.

In the wake of the Gulf war, we are witnessing intensive American pressures being exercised on the Arabs in general and the Palestinians in particular, and a further biased attitude on the part of the U.S. administration towards Israel, said Sawt Al Shaab Arabic daily. What we notice at this moment is an exposition of the U.S. stand with further proof that the U.S. administration lacks credibility particularly in the light of its attempts to stall on the implementation of U.N. resolutions concerning the Arab-Israeli conflict, the paper noted. The Soviet Union under American pressure has showed retreat from the idea of international conference to implement U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, and the U.S. administration is placing more and more pressure on the Palestinians to offer concessions to Israel before any negotiations can begin, the paper noted. It said that it is clear that the U.S. administration is striving to force the Arabs and the Palestinians to accept the long rejected Camp David accords and succumb to the wishes of Israel. It is true that the European Community and President Bush have both recognised Jordan's important role in the peace making process but, the paper said, Jordan's role can only be directed in a manner to serve a just and durable peace in the region. The paper said that Jordan can by no means accept any settlement divorced from resolutions 242 and 338 and the exchange of land for peace.

Ecopolitical Forum

Mentality of vengeance is problem for all

THE DECISION of the Gulf Cooperation Council members to suspend financial aid to Jordan and PLO as announced last Saturday by the GCC Secretary General Abdullah Bishara has to be put in perspective, especially as the suspension was ascribed to the positions taken by Jordan and PLO during the Gulf crisis. On Monday Mr. Bishara denied a former decision was taken and said his remarks were "not accurately" reported. It is not a secret that some Gulf states looked always for a justification to quit their financial commitments towards other Arab countries because such aid has seemingly been a nuisance to them. Officially, such a policy has never been aired of course but, unofficially, it was a foregone fact. And irrespective of how different parties appraise this issue in terms of right or wrong, the Gulf crisis and the stance of certain Arab countries towards it has provided the GCC members with a golden opportunity to suspend aid, which they apparently could not afford to miss. Now the financial aid Gulf states provide to recipients like Jordan, the PLO and other Arab countries goes eventually to the Jordanians, Palestinians and other Arab peoples. When such aid is suspended, the Arab peoples not the leaders or the rulers will suffer. The suspension of aid is a punishment to the people and it is the height of ill-intention to punish the people for a supposedly miscalculated foreign policy.

Take the case of PLO. Mr. Yasser Arafat is the leader of this

organisation at this particular time but he is not the PLO itself. Arafat is a person; the PLO is an institution. If Mr. Bush follows erroneous path in his foreign policy, it will be ridiculous for others to end up wanting to demolish the USA or the White House. This is exactly what the GCC member states want to do to Jordan and the PLO. They dubiously fail to differentiate between a leader and his policies on the one hand and the institution or the country on the other.

One gets rightly fearful that such attitudes denote the dominance of a mentality of vengeance at even the highest levels of thinking. National policies and foreign relations cannot be run like that without provoking failures in the first place and inviting counter reprisals later. The Kuwaiti ambition of achieving a stable, safe and normal statehood will never mature without having normal and healthy relations with all Arab countries including Iraq. The mentality of reprisals and the philosophy of unforgiveness heralded by Mr. Bishara form a strategy based on shortsightedness because it looks back more than forth.

And such a strategy ignores the lessons of history as well. One such lesson indicates that the wealth disparities in the area were a main reason behind the buildup and eruption of the Gulf crisis. The economic noose around the necks of whatever Arab countries will effectively contribute to the making of other crises which will explode sometime in the future. Jordan's role and

policies, it seems, are appreciated in the world much more than in certain parts of the Arab World. Thus it will always be able to make up for the suspended aid of GCC countries. Most probably, this non-Arab aid will not be heavily mingled with the charity tone that over loaded the Arab aid especially the Kuwaiti one.

Financial aid to Jordan from GCC members started at \$778 million in 1979 following Baghdad Arab summit conference and dwindled to \$429 million in 1984. It maintained the \$400-500 million level thereafter until it sank to only \$266 million in 1990. However, around 60 per cent of this aid came from Saudi Arabia, a country with a mature foreign policy which conceivably will not be a hostage to vengeance for a long time. Kuwait's share will not exceed 21 per cent and at one time dived to as low as \$25 million. This is a figure without which Jordan can afford to live as Kuwait's foreign policy will possibly be affected by vengeance for a long time.

The government of Kuwait and Kuwaitis committed some outstanding mistakes in the near past. They allowed their dispute with Iraq to reach the point of exploding into military action. Second, they refused the Soviet overture which would have saved their presently blazing oil wells. Third, they mistreated Palestinians and other Arabs after the liberation of their country. Now they are making vengeance a cornerstone of their policy. Let us hope this will be the last of their fatal mistakes.

By Dr. Abdalla Malki

The weak shall inherit nothing

By Noam Chomsky

ATRUISM about the new world order is that it is economically bipolar and militarily unipolar. Recent events help one to understand the interplay of these factors.

As the glorious "turkey shoot" began in the desert, the New York Times published a fragment of a national security review from the early days of the Bush administration, dealing with "Third World threats." It reads: "In cases where the U.S. confronts much weaker enemies, our challenge will be not simply to defeat them, but to defeat them decisively and rapidly." Any other outcome would be "embarrassing" and might "undercut political support."

"Much weaker enemies" pose only one threat to the U.S.: the threat of independence, always intolerable. The U.S. will support the most murderous tyrant as long as he plays along, and will labour to overthrow Third World democrats if they depart from their service function. The documentary and historical records are clear on this score. The leaked fragment makes no reference to peaceful means. As understood on all sides, in its confrontations with Third World threats the U.S. is "politically weak"; its demands are not likely to gain public support, so diplomacy is a dangerous exercise. And a "much weaker" opponent must not merely be defeated but pulverised if the central lesson of World Order is to be learned: we are the masters, and you shine our shoes.

There are other useful lessons. The domestic population must appreciate "the stark and vivid definition of principle... baked into (George Bush) during his years at Andover and Yale, that honour and duty compels you to punch the bully in the face." These are the admiring words of the reporter who released the policy review, then quoting the hero himself: "By God, we've kicked the Vietnam syndrome once and for all." No longer, the president exults, will we be troubled by "the sickly inhibitions against the use of military force," to borrow the terms of Reaganite intellectual Norman Podhoretz.

The ground had been well prepared for overcoming this grave malady, including dedicated efforts to ensure that the Vietnam war is properly understood — as a "noble cause," not a violent assault against South Vietnam, then all of Indochina. Americans generally estimate Vietnamese deaths at about 100,000, a recent academic study reveals. Its authors ask what conclusions we would draw if the German public estimated Holocaust deaths at 300,000, while declaring their righteousness. A question we might ponder.

The principle that you punch the bully in the face — when you are sure that he is securely bound and beaten to a pulp — is a

natural one for advocates of the rule of force. Cheap victories may also mobilise a frightened domestic population, and may deflect attention from the domestic disasters of the Reagan-Bush years, no small matter as the country continues its march towards a two-tiered society with striking Third World features.

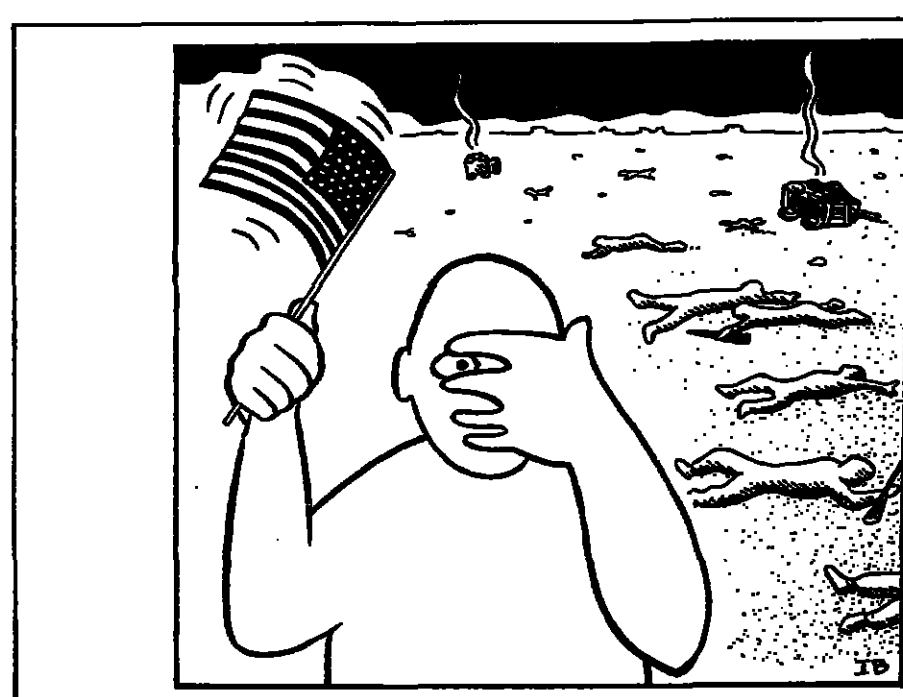
George Bush's career as a "public servant" also has its lessons concerning the new world order. He is the one head of state who stands condemned by the World Court for "the unlawful use of force." He dismisses with contempt the court's call for reparations for these particular crimes (others are far beyond reach), while he and his sycophants solemnly demand reparations from Iraq.

Bush opened the post-cold war era with the murderous invasion of Panama, imposing the rule of the 10 per cent white minority and guaranteeing U.S. control over the canal and the bases that have been used to train the gangsters who terrorise Latin America. Since he became U.N. ambassador in 1971, the U.S. is far in the lead in vetoing Security Council resolutions and blocking the U.N. peace-keeping function, followed by Britain. Bush was called to head the CIA in 1975, just in time to support near-genocide in East Timor. He then lent his talents to the war against the church and other deviants committed to "the preferential option for the poor" in Central America, now littered with tortured and mutilated bodies, perhaps devastated beyond recovery.

In the Middle East, Bush supported Israel's harsh occupations, its savage invasion of Lebanon and its refusal to honour Security Council Resolution 425 calling for its immediate withdrawal from Lebanon (March 1978, one of several). The plea was renewed by the government of Lebanon in February, ignored as usual while the U.S. client terrorists the occupied region and bombs at will, and the rest of Lebanon is taken over by Bush's new friend Hafez Al Assad, a clone of Saddam Hussein. The Turkish "peacekeepers" were also authorised to intensify their repression of Kurds, in partial payment for their services.

Plainly, we have here a man who should be lauded for rare principle as he leads us to a New World Order.

The principles of the policy review were followed throughout the Gulf crisis. In July, Bush indicated that he had no objections to Iraq's rectifying its border disputes with Kuwait by force, or intimidating its neighbours to raise the price of oil. Misreading the signals, Saddam took all of Kuwait, thus demonstrating that he was not only a murderous gangster, which is fine by U.S.-U.K. standards, but an independent nationalist, which is quite improper. Standard policies were then invoked.



The U.S. and U.K. moved at once to undermine sanctions and diplomacy, which had unusually high prospects of success. From late August, Iraqi settlement offers were released that State Department officials regarded as "serious" and "negotiable," including complete withdrawal from Kuwait on terms that would have been pursued by anyone interested in peace. Efforts to avoid the ground war with full Iraqi withdrawal, saving tens of thousands of lives, were contemptuously brushed aside. Diplomacy is ruled out, and since this Third World country, with its peasant army, is plainly a "much weaker enemy" it has to be crushed, so that the right lessons are taught.

The intellectual community swung into action, portraying Saddam as a new Hitler poised to take over the world. When Bush announced that there would be no negotiations, a hundred editorials lauded him for his extraordinary efforts at diplomacy. When he proclaimed that "aggressors cannot be rewarded," instead of collapsing in ridicule responsible commentators stood in awe of his high principles.

Some agreed that the U.S. and Britain had been "inconsistent" in the past (in fact, they had consistently pursued their own interests). But now, we were assured, all had changed; they had learned that the right way to respond to aggression is by the quick resort to violence. We can therefore expect that the RAF will be sent to bomb Damascus, Tel Aviv, Jakarta (after British Aerospace stops arming the killers), Washington and a host of others.

Oddly, these new insights were not accompanied by praise for Saddam for attacking Israel, though his sordid arguments compare well enough with those of his fellow-criminal and long-time friend in Washington.

In such ways, the ground was

prepared for the merciless slaughter that a leading Third World journal describes as "the most cowardly war ever fought on this planet." The corpses have quickly disappeared from view, joining mounds of others that do not disturb the tranquility of the civilised.

There also seems to be no concern over the glaringly obvious fact that no official reason was ever offered for going to war — no reason, that is, that could not be instantly refuted by a literate teenager. Again, this is the hallmark of a totalitarian culture, and a signpost to the new world order.

No less revealing are the few extra-official efforts to justify the rejection of peaceful means. Thus we read that this case was different, because of the annexation; the U.S. reaction was underway before the annexation, and continued unchanged after Iraqi proposals that would have reversed it, not to speak of the U.S.-U.K. response to other cases of annexation, no less horrifying. Other arguments are equally weighty.

In one of the rare efforts to face the crucial question, Timothy Garton Ash explains in the New York Review that, while sanctions were possible in dealing with South Africa or communist East Europe, Saddam Hussein is different. That concludes the argument. We now understand why it was proper to pursue "quiet diplomacy" while our South African friends caused more than \$60 billion in damage and 1.5 million deaths from 1980 to 1988 in the neighbouring states — putting aside South Africa and Namibia, and the preceding decade. They are basically decent folk, like us and the communist tyrants. Why? One answer is suggested by Nelson Mandela, who condemns the hypocrisy and prejudice of the highly selective response to the crimes of the "brown skinned" Iraqis. The same is true when the New York

Times assures us that "the world" is united against Saddam Hussein, the most hated man in "the world"... the world, that is, minus its darker faces.

It is understandable that Western racism should surface with such stunning clarity after the cold war. For 70 years it has been possible to disguise traditional practices behind the veil of "defence against the Soviets," generally a sham, now lost as a pretext. We return, then, to the days when the New York press explained that "we must go on slaughtering the natives in English fashion, and taking what muddy glory lies in the wholesale killing till they have learned to respect our arms. The more difficult task of getting them to respect our intentions will follow." In fact, they understand our intentions well enough.

For the people of the Middle East, the new world order looks grim. The victor is the violent state that has long rejected any serious diplomatic approach to regional disarmament and security problems, often virtually alone. The U.S.'s strategic conception has been that the local managers of Gulf oil riches should be protected by regional enforcers, preferably non-Arab, though bloody tyrants of the Hafez Al Assad variety may be allowed to join the club, possibly even Egypt if it can be purchased. The U.S. will seek some agreement among these clients and might finally even consider an international conference, if it can be properly managed. As Kissinger insisted, Europe and Japan must be kept out of the diplomatic, but the USSR might now be tolerated on the assumption that it will be obedient in its current straits, possibly Britain as well.

As for the Palestinians, the U.S. can now move towards the solution outlined by James Baker well before the Gulf crisis: Jordan is the Palestinian state; the occupied territories are to be ruled in accord with the basic guidelines

of the Israeli government, with Palestinians permitted to collect taxes in Nablus; their political representatives will be chosen from them, with the PLO excluded; and "free elections" will be held under Israeli military control with the Palestinian leadership in prison camps. Now excuses will be devised for the old policies, which will be hailed as generous and forthcoming.

Economic development for the Palestinians had always been barred, while their land and water were taken. They had been permitted to serve the Israeli economy as virtual slave labour, but this interlude is passing. The recent curfew administered a further blow to the Palestinian economy. The victors can now proceed with the policy articulated in February 1989 by Yitzhak Rabin of the Labour Party, then defence secretary, when he informed Peace Now leaders of his satisfaction with the U.S.-PLO dialogue, meaningless discussions to divert attention while Israel suppresses the intifada by force.

The Palestinians "will be broken," Rabin promised, reiterating the prediction of Israeli Arabists 40 years earlier: the Palestinians will "be crushed," "will die or 'turn into human dust and the waste of society, and join the most impoverished classes in the Arab countries." Or they will leave, while Russian Jews, now barred from the U.S. by policies designed to deny them a free choice, flock to an expanded Israel, leaving the diplomatic issues moot, as the Baker-Shamir-Peres plan envisaged.

The political leadership in Washington and London have created economic and social catastrophes at home and have no idea how to deal with them, except to exploit their military power. Following the advice of the business press, they may try to turn their countries into mercenary states, serving as the global mafia, selling "protection" to the rich, defending them against "Third World threats" and demanding proper payment for the service. Riches funnelled from the Gulf oil producers are to prop up the two failing economies. German-led Europe, later Japan, will carry out the tasks of "Latin Americanisation" most of the domains of the collapsing Soviet tyranny, with the former communist bureaucracy probably running the branch offices of foreign corporations. The rest of the Third World will be controlled by the economic pressures, if possible, by force if necessary.

These are some of the contours of the planned new world order that comes into view as the beguiling rhetoric is lifted away.

Noam Chomsky is Professor of Modern Languages and Linguistics at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. His next book, *Deterring Democracy*, will be published by Verso in June. The article is reprinted from *The Guardian*.

Gulf war allies 'lacked basic knowledge' about Iraq

By John Fullerton

Reuters

CAIRO — Lack of grass-roots intelligence on conditions inside Iraq made the task of winning the Gulf war more difficult than it need have been, according to some Middle East specialists.

"The allies had good surveillance from the skies, but not on the ground in terms of the Iraqi people and their intentions," said Tahseen Bashir, a prominent Egyptian political commentator and former presidential spokesman.

The problem of understanding Iraq persisted after the war

ended, with Washington confused about its aims as Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein faced revolts at home, he said.

"To formulate workable options you need to know the people of the region, and have a grasp of their feelings."

At the strategic level, said a U.S. military analyst with years of experience in the Arab World, the allies failed to pick up some vital information before and during the war.

"We should have known the Iraqis had no chemical warheads for their Scud missiles. We underestimated the number of Scud launchers, and

overestimated the number of troops Iraq had in Kuwait and southern Iraq," he said.

"We also exaggerated the Iraqis' will to fight."

The analyst, who asked not to be named, said the fault lay with Washington's emphasis on technical rather than human intelligence-gathering.

NEWS ANALYSIS

Reviving a debate among the intelligence community dating back to the late 1970s, when President Jimmy Carter slashed the manpower of the Central Intelligence Agency,

he said:

"The lesson is that the United States has to spend time and money to understand the people and their leaders' intentions long before a crisis erupts, and not simply rely on satellites and aircraft to spy on military capabilities when trouble erupts."

Shireen Hunter, a Washington-based specialist on the Middle East, thought the problem was not so much lack of resources but more a matter of how available intelligence was used or ignored.

All too often, she said, Washington and its European

allies used intelligence to fit a prevailing mindset, discarding information that did not support a particular attitude or preference.

Looking back to the first Gulf war, between Iraq and Iran, she said: "Iran's capability was grossly exaggerated... politicians tend to believe what they want to believe."

Referring to Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and the late Iranian spiritual leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, she said:

"Basically, it was fashionable then to see Saddam as the victim and Khomeini as the

aggressor." As a result the United States and European countries helped arm Iraq and provide it with advanced military technology.

Now, Hunter said, there was exaggerated concern that Iran would try to exploit dissent among Iraqi Shiite Muslims to take over the southern part of Iraq.

"But there are certain facts of geography, population and history that you cannot bend," she said. "It's more a matter of common sense than secret intelligence."

Kuwait

(Continued from page 1)

led these demands the minimum Kuwaitis could ask and hope for.

Gen. Badr blamed ministers of the former government, five of them Sabahs, for his country's swift defeat by Iraq and said they should not be in a new cabinet expected to be named this week.

"The government virtually invited the enemy to invade Kuwait," he said. "The threat was very, very clear."

But until the last minute, he said, the 20,000-man army was not fully mobilised, its equipment was not combat-ready and its troops were short of ammunition.

The Sabah-dominated government, formed two months before the Aug. 2 invasion, resigned two weeks ago in the face of growing popular discontent with its inability to restore basic services after the end of the war.

The prime minister, Crown Prince Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah — the emir's cousin — was asked to form a new government.

One opposition group, the Muslim Brotherhood, dominated by conservative Sunni Muslims, refused an offer by Sheikh Saad to join the new cabinet unless an election date was set beforehand.

Another group, the Aug. 2 movement — including more radical Shiite Muslims and many soldiers who joined the resistance — has said it will not disarm until a date is set.

Kuwait radio on Tuesday quoted Sheikh Saad as saying the emir had not yet set a date for elections but the new cabinet would be announced this week.

Officials and diplomats had expected the announcement last week but opposition leaders say it was delayed due to their refusal to join.

A Western diplomat said several Western governments were upgrading their efforts to persuade the emir to meet at least some of the opposition demands from "gentle advice to gentle pressure."

Political activists say meetings with the crown prince — who, like the emir, lived in exile during the occupation — had achieved little. They accuse him of failing to understand social changes triggered by the invasion.

"Like last year, he is still speaking about regulations and measures to control parliament..." one said. "This is unacceptable now."

The emir dissolved parliament in 1986, citing a foreign conspiracy against Kuwait.

After stormy pro-democracy rallies last year he called an election in June to choose 50 members of a 75-member national council. The other 25 members were appointed by the emir.

The pro-democracy movement boycotted the election and called the new council unconstitutional and toothless.

The council has not met since Kuwait was liberated.

In a dose of pressure from abroad, U.S. President George Bush sent a letter to Kuwait's ruler, urging greater pluralism in the emirate, diplomats and Kuwaiti government officials said.

Six main opposition groups banded together Monday to issue the call for more freedom in Kuwait. Leaders of pan-Arabist, leftist, Sunni Muslim, Shiite Muslim, independent and Western-leaning moderate groups signed the nine-page manifesto, "a future outlook on the construction of Kuwait."

In his letter delivered Sunday, President Bush urged Sheikh Jaber to democratise Kuwait, according to Western diplomats and Kuwaiti officials familiar with the contents. They said the letter called in general terms for elections and more pluralism in Kuwait.

Mohammad Al Alradi, the chief of protocol for the emir, confirmed Kuwait's ruler received a letter from Mr. Bush Sunday. Asked if it concerned political changes, he said: "All of President Bush's letters are about democracy."

Meanwhile, several ex-ministers, the ex-speaker of parliament, lawyers, judges and wealthy businessmen penned their names to the democracy manifesto in a signing ceremony that lasted until early Monday morning.

"It is a historic manifesto because so many different groups are participating," said Abdullah Al Nebari, a former member of parliament and pan-Arab nationalist who leads the Kuwait Democratic Forum, an umbrella group for the secular side of the opposition.

"This is the first time we have all to be united under one tent," said Sheikh Jaseem Al Mohalhel, leader of the Islamic Constitutionalist Movement, the main fundamentalist organisation, and Mr. Nebari's ideological foe.

Kuwait said Monday it was issuing permits to allow hundreds of thousands of its citizens who fled during the occupation to return.

But it said the Kuwaitis would not be able to come back immediately and did not set a date for their return.

"It is our pleasure to announce to citizens that we have started issuing return permits to our beloved homeland, and that the programme for issuing entry permits started on March 30," the Interior Ministry said in a statement.

About 400,000 of Kuwait's 700,000 citizens lived in exile in neighbouring Arab states and Europe following the Iraqi invasion.

The government has prevented most of them from coming back, saying the wrecked public services could not cope with a large influx.

Electricity, telephone, water and food supplies are gradually being restored in the emirate.

The ministry announcement set a schedule for Kuwaiti exiles to obtain return permits in Bahrain and Saudi Arabia.

However, it said the permit did not allow its holder to enter Kuwait immediately. "The holder has to wait until further instructions are issued."

U.N. action

(Continued from page 1)

The NSC said in a statement that it wanted Turkey to request an emergency meeting of the Security Council since 200,000 refugees approaching the border were in grave danger.

The NSC, which comprises top cabinet and military officials, advises the government on key policy issues and its directives are generally needed.

Discussions on the Iraqi rebellion would delay adoption of the council's Gulf war ceasefire resolution. The United States, keen to withdraw American troops from the region, is pressing for adoption of the resolution.

In Washington, a State Department official said on condition of anonymity that the United States would press for an immediate vote on the resolution after Tuesday morning's private council consultations.

Iraqi Ambassador Abdul Amir Al Anbari Monday complained that "the resolution doesn't call for a permanent cessation of hostilities, simply a ceasefire... to us, a ceasefire is very dangerous in the sense it implies the existence of a state of war or hostilities, but for the time being the parties have ceased firing."

His country finds the resolution humiliating and believes it will punish innocent Iraqis for generations to come, the envoy said.

"I wonder whether the American people, the American press... will tolerate this," Mr. Anbari said. "You can't force a country to do something which its government doesn't want to. There are limits to the coercion which one country can exercise over another."

The resolution demands destruction under U.N. supervision of Iraq's chemical and biological weapons, nuclear weapons-grade materials and most missiles. The United Nations would demarcate and patrol the Iraq-Kuwait border.

Some non-aligned nations object, arguing this gives the United Nations power to infringe upon what are properly domestic affairs.

Non-aligned nations met Monday to devise a collective response — possibly an alternative resolution or amendments to water down the proposed resolution. Cuba alone suggested more

than 30 possible amendments including lifting the U.N.-imposed economic embargo of Iraq and declaring an end to hostilities. Yemen and India reportedly have their own suggestions.

The United States, Britain, China, France and the Soviet Union — the council's permanent members — met earlier to put finishing touches on the proposed document.

They agree generally about its major points, but China has not disclosed how it will vote and an abstention was considered likely.

Rebellion

(Continued from page 1)

at the hands of the allies in the Gulf war, launching a devastating counterattack on Wednesday night aimed at crushing the Kurds.

"The army still seems quite strong. We saw some very accurate and very heavy tank fire," she said, adding: "The Kurdish guerrillas are not used to full battle against a conventional army."

A spokesman for another major group in the Kurdish front, the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP), said he had no information on the "recapture" of Kirkuk.

But he reported fighting eight kilometres east of the city on the road to Sulaimaniya, a Kurdish city believed to be still in rebel hands, and at the nearby village of Kara-Hanjir.

Kirkuk produced one third of Iraq's oil before the Gulf crisis and controls a key oil pipeline.

On Tuesday, the national Iranian news agency IRNA quoted refugees crossing into Iran as saying rebels were still battling units of the army in parts of southern Iraq.

The refugees said rebels had killed a number of commanders in attacking a base of the Republican Guard in the city of Basra.

Tehran has delivered a strong protest to Baghdad over what it said was an incursion into Iranian territory by anti-Tehran rebels based in Iraq, IRNA reported Tuesday.

IRNA said the Iraqi charge d'affaires in Tehran was summoned to the Foreign Ministry where Hussein Sheikholslam, deputy foreign minister for Afro-Arab affairs, demanded an explanation for the attack by a brigade of "forces inside Iraq."

IRNA said on Monday that Revolutionary Guards based north of the border town of Qasr-e-Shirin had repelled an attack by Iranian opposition forces of the Mujahedeen-e-Khalq, killing many of them and capturing several others.

The Mujahedeen has accused Iran of sending heavily armed Revolutionary Guards into Iraq to attack its bases under cover of the Iraqi rebellion.

The Iranian rebels said they had repelled an attack by Revolutionary Guards at their base near the Iraqi city of Jalula Monday.

The Mujahedeen said after the clash the area was "littered with the hundreds of bodies" of the guardsmen.

The Mujahedeen said its guerrillas had killed 300 Revolutionary Guards in clashes on border.

The statement said Iran was rushing reinforcements to the region following setbacks at the hands of the Mujahedeen.

It said several commanders of the guards had died in the clashes and named some of them.

An Istanbul daily reported

Tuesday that Turkish troops crossed into northern Iraq and attacked camps used by Kurdish guerrillas who operate in Turkey.

Commenting on the report by Sabah, Turkish Premier Yildirim Akbulut said, "there hasn't been any such thing."

Official sources, who did not want to be identified, told the Associated Press that there was an operation in progress against the guerrillas in Turkey near the border with Iraq and that "small scale incursions cannot be totally ruled out."

Sabah reported that elite Turkish mountain troops crossed into northern Iraq from five points Sunday night, attacked the camps used by Kurdish Labour Party (PKK), an illegal group, and killed at least 60 guerrillas.

The PKK has been waging a guerrilla war in southeastern Turkey for nearly seven years.

The paper said 60 rebels were killed in the Gurlul camp, across from the Turkish border township of Uludere alone, and that an unknown number of casualties occurred at two other camps, Sinat 1 and 2.

It said the troops also destroyed heavy equipment seized by the Iraqi Kurds from Baghdad troops last month at the initial stages of their rebellion and later turned over to the PKK guerrillas.

Gen. Waller, interviewed from Fort Lewis, Washington, was asked in a television interview about the views of some U.S. soldiers in the Gulf who have asked why they cannot fight with the rebels.

"That's an internal Iraqi problem," Gen. Waller said.

"I don't think the soldiers in many cases understand that we have accomplished the mission that the president of the United States and the national command authority established for us," he said.

Israel

(Continued from page 1)

towns. Palestinians said the measures were more likely to increase violence than stem it.

"People's frustration is rising... it is certainly encouraging extremists," a supporter of the underground Palestine Communist Party told Reuters.

Police in Arab Jerusalem fired rubber bullets and tear gas at Arab protesters in the Shuafat Palestinian refugee camp then clamped the area under curfew on Tuesday, police said.

There were no reported casualties and it was not immediately clear if the protest was connected to the new Israeli measures.

Prime Minister Shamir said meanwhile that Israel was ready to consider steps towards reducing arms in the Middle East if Arab states end their state of war with the Jewish state.

"Israel would want... to bring about long-range steps like reducing conventional and non-conventional weapons in our region," Mr. Shamir said.

The prime minister said arms reduction would only be possible "if the Arabs would agree, for example, to end the state of war between them and Israel."

Mr. Shamir made the remarks to visiting U.S. Senator Frank R. Lautenberg, a Democrat from New Jersey.

Israel is believed to be the only country in the Middle East to have a nuclear arsenal.

Also Tuesday, two Palestinians were shot to death and their bodies dumped near the West Bank village of Qabatiya. Reports said the men had been kidnapped by marked men after they were accused of collaborating with Israel.

U.S. expects to meet rebel Kurds this week, says no shift in policy

WASHINGTON (R) — The U.S. State Department said Monday it expected to have its first political meeting this week with representatives of Kurdish rebel groups fighting to overthrow the government of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

A senior official said the meetings with Iraqi dissidents did not signal a shift in U.S. policy, which has been to stand apart from the civil war that has raged in Iraq since the end of the Gulf war.

But the meetings suggest the administration of President George Bush felt a need to respond to criticism, mostly from the media and scholars, of its refusal to help the Kurds and others in their losing fight.

"We received several meeting

requests from Iraqi opposition figures. We're evaluating those requests," States Department deputy spokesman Richard Boucher told reporters.

"We anticipate that some meetings probably will take place this week and probably with officials of the Near East bureau" of the State Department in Washington, he said.

Department officials have met Kurdish groups to discuss their problems within the context of minority group human rights problems in Iraq. The meetings took place when the groups were pressing for a separate Kurdish state and were not active in Iraq, one U.S. official said.

Mr. Boucher declined to identify Kurdish groups taking part in

the meetings this week until details were worked out.

Some requests came from Kurdish-Americans but none from senior Kurdish leaders, like Masoud Barazani, a U.S. official said.

Asked if the talks would go beyond human rights, Mr. Boucher said: "I'm sure we'll discuss a fairly broad range of things with them."

Before signalling last week that it would consider talks with dissidents, including Shiite Muslims as well as Kurds, the State Department had received few or no requests, he said.

After being praised for a military campaign that forced Iraq from Kuwait, Mr. Bush is now

faulted for urging Iraqis to overthrow President Saddam but refusing to help them overcome government forces.

Senate majority leader George Mitchell, a Washington Democrat, said Sunday the United States should shoot down Iraqi helicopters attacking rebels but otherwise backed Mr. Bush's policy of staying out of the civil war.

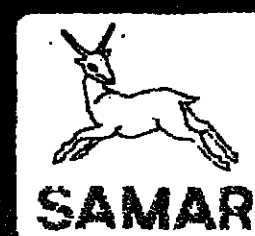
Kurdish rebel leader Barazani, his forces falling back in the face of the Iraqi army's advance, appealed to the United States, France and Britain to act through the United Nations to help his people.

Mr. Boucher was unaware of a formal plea for help.

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Record drop in Japan foreign reserves show impact of Gulf aid

TOKYO (R) — Japan's foreign reserves fell a record \$8 billion in March, the government said Monday, suggesting that much of the nation's Gulf aid has been passed on to the United States and other nations.

In March, Japan had set aside 1.17 trillion yen (about \$8.5 billion), towards the cost of the U.S.-led multinational forces in the Gulf war against Iraq.

"It's now in black and white. Japan has paid its dues for (Operation) Desert Storm," said Jesper Koll, chief economist at S.G. Warburg Securities (Japan) Inc.

Japan's foreign ministry and U.S. officials had previously confirmed only that \$5.7 billion in the way of Gulf aid had been transferred by Japan.

Foreign exchange markets had nervously awaited the transfer, fearing that the conversion of Japan's Gulf aid contribution from yen into dollars would send the U.S. currency sharply higher.

After the record fall, Japan's external reserves stood at \$69.89 billion, a finance ministry official said.

The previous record drop was \$6.95 billion at the end of March 1990, the official said.

Economists said that although the Bank of Japan spent roughly \$550 million to support the ailing yen during the month, it probably made a similar amount in interest on the securities in which its foreign currencies are invested.

The remaining difference of about \$8 billion is near the \$8.5 billion Japan was scheduled to donate to the U.S.-led forces.

Economists said the Japanese government probably transferred the aid package to the United States via a special account Japan maintains at the U.S. Federal Reserve Board.

Such an exchange would be outside foreign exchange markets and would not affect the dollar/yen rate, they said.

The plunge in reserves marked the first time since July 1987 that external reserves have fallen below \$70 billion.

Economists, however, said Japan still had ample reserves. Central banks often like to have foreign reserves equal to about two quarters worth of net exports.

Economists said by that measure, Japan's foreign reserves were nearly double the minimum level.

U.S. writes off \$250m Zambia debt

LUSAKA (AP) — The United States Monday signed an agreement writing off \$250 million owed to it by this impoverished southern African nation.

U.S. Ambassador Gordon Streeb signed a pact that cancelled debts of \$63 million immediately, officials said.

This will be followed by two subsequent debt review phases linked to the success of current Western-style economic reforms, said officials who asked not to be identified.

Zambia is the fifteenth southern African country to receive this form of debt forgiveness on principal loans, arrears and interest.

The U.S.-based World Bank approved market-oriented reforms in Zambia that became effective March 13.

The United States government is giving \$1.12 billion in debt relief to 15 African nations that have said they will meet various conditions on reform, including steps toward democratic rule.

Israel to cut import duties over 5 years

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel Monday approved a plan to cut import duties over five years and drop quotas, despite opposition by local manufacturers and trade unions, the finance ministry said.

The plan passed by a ministerial committee applies to imports from countries with which Israel has no tariff agreement. Israel has a free trade agreement with the United States and a special arrangement with the European Community.

The plan, which takes effect Sept. 1, does not include agricultural imports. Duties will be reduced from up to 75 per cent to eight per cent for raw materials and 12 per cent for finished goods, the treasury said.

Customs on some goods, such as textiles and wood products, will be cut over seven years since the government believes these sectors are especially vulnerable to cheaper imports.

Fearing a flood of goods from the Far East, Israeli industrialists attacked the plan, saying duties should be cut over a longer period. Trade union leaders said the plan would exacerbate unemployment, already at almost 10 per cent.

New Zealand slashes the dole to coax unemployed back to work

WELLINGTON (R) — New Zealand's conservative government cut the dole and sickness benefits by up to a quarter Monday, saying the unemployed must be coaxed back to work.

The big welfare cuts have provoked widespread protests. Critics say there are simply no jobs to go to.

"We have a finance minister who believes that somehow everything will come right if only the government and its functions wither and disappear," said opposition Labour Party leader Mike Moore in a statement.

But Social Welfare Minister Jenny Shipley said too many New Zealanders were earning so much on the dole that there was little incentive to look for work.

"This economy will destroy itself unless we turn that incentive around," she said in an interview. Referring to young, single people on the dole, she said: "They are the workforce of the future and we cannot afford them to be tempted to stay there indefinitely."

From April 1, dole for single people aged 20 to 24 fell by 24.7 per cent to 108.17 New Zealand dollars (\$63.80) a week. Payments for the sick in the same group dropped by 20 per cent.

To a visitor, New Zealand seems a prosperous country with few signs of poverty despite years of economic stagnation. But hardship is growing as the welfare state shrinks.

"When I was asked the first time if I wanted a food parcel I can remember my nose going up in the air and thinking: 'I don't need food parcels,'" said Pearl Briggs, a single mother of four.

Then I thought: 'Come on kid, be honest with yourself.' I didn't have anything there to feed the children."

"Having to choose whether... to keep the power on or to feed the children — those sort of decisions are just inhumane," she said.

Apart from encouraging new attitudes to work, the cuts are also aimed at cutting the budget deficit, which is forecast to hit 1.7 billion New Zealand dollars (\$1 billion) in 1990-91.

The cuts will save the taxpayer 245 million New Zealand dollars (\$145 million) this financial year and the government plans to cut a further 1.3 billion dollars (\$770 million) in 1991-92.

But many economists believe that cutting welfare spending will push New Zealand even deeper into recession. People on benefits will spend less, bankrupting more companies and pushing unemployment, now nine per cent of the workforce, higher.

Leading church figures have attacked the cuts, while government member of parliament Gilbert Myles says it is foolish to brand the unemployed work-shy.

"You've had people educated that everyone on a benefit is a bludge (work-shy) or for anyone who has lost their job, there's work out there. There's not... there's no work, there's no jobs," said Myles.

Shipley said spending cuts had already brought lower interest rates, which the government believes are essential for stimulating the economy. But jobs would not appear overnight.

"It will take time for that to translate itself into new work opportunities. But this government is convinced that is the only way out of the serious fiscal and social position that we currently find ourselves in," she pointed out.

PLO orders spending cuts

TUNIS, Tunisia (AP) — The PLO has ordered deep spending cuts to meet an expected sharp reduction in funding by Arab states bitter at Yasser Arafat's support for Saddam Hussein, an adviser to the PLO chairman said Tuesday.

Bassam Abu Sharif, who advises Arafat on political matters, said he could not provide figures on the financial crisis.

Media reports have said Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) funding this year will be reduced by 80 per cent, from \$300 million to \$60 million.

Other PLO officials said earlier this month that the PLO's budget had been cut by 35 per cent to cope with the serious drop in revenue.

Abu Sharif confirmed that PLO officials have been ordered to tighten their belts.

The PLO will not cut educational and social programmes in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip that play a major part in maintaining support for the organisation among Palestinians living there, he said.

"We're reducing expenditure as a precaution," Abu Sharif said. "We're not closing diplomatic missions, but some people working in these missions will not have their contracts extended."

Abu Sharif said officials at PLO headquarters in this North African country have been told to cut spending, including travel, by 20 to 30 per cent.

The PLO's finances have been strained by a cut-off in aid by oil-rich Gulf states over Arafat's support for Saddam.

Before last August, these countries, including Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, provided up to \$43 million a month, much of it used to bankroll the three-year-old Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories.

Abu Sharif said that reports that the six Gulf states had decided to suspend aid have not been officially confirmed.

But these states have ordered large-scale deportations among the two million Palestinians who worked in the Gulf, cutting off

another \$8-\$10 million a month in remittances.

Among the financial losses the PLO faces are contributions of five to seven per cent of the salaries of the estimated 300,000 Palestinians living in Kuwait, Abu Sharif said.

In addition, these Palestinians would no longer be able to send money to relatives living in the occupied territories.

"These were modest sums of \$200 to \$300 which made an enormous difference in the budgets of these families, especially when you consider that during the Gulf crisis the Israeli authorities prevented Palestinians from working by imposing a curfew," he said.

Ozal sees tourism boom in '91

ANKARA (R) — Turkey's tourism industry, stalled by the Gulf crisis, shows signs of a boom ahead, President Turgut Ozal was quoted as saying.

"Turkey has emerged very strong from the Gulf crisis. We are receiving signals that this year will be very good for tourism," the semi-official Anatolian News Agency quoted him as telling a meeting of Turkish and European tourist agencies.

"Turkey's name was repeated (in the world) thousands of times along with Egypt and Jordan during the Gulf crisis. The first positive effects of this will be seen in tourism," he said.

Officials said the Gulf crisis cost Turkey about \$300 million in 1990 tourism revenues expected after Aug. 2 when Iraq seized Kuwait. They said 1991 would have been a total loss if the Gulf war had been prolonged.

Since the war ended, tourist interest in Turkey had picked up but the real boom should be expected in 1992, they added.

First taste of market economy angers Soviets

MOSCOW (Agencies) — Soviet shops doubled and tripled prices on goods from meat to children's clothes Tuesday, giving citizens a first alarming taste of hardship to come on the road to a market economy.

In the Kremlin, Soviet leaders met labour chiefs in an effort to end a four-week strike now threatening to scuttle President Mikhail Gorbachev's vision of gradual reform.

Shoppers on Moscow streets reacted with a mixture of resignation and near-panic as they queued for goods in sparsely stocked state stores.

Extra supplies expected to ease the blow of the increases failed to arrive and shelves remained as badly stocked as over the last few days of panic buying.

Bread queues, for many a bitter symbol of the country's growing plight, formed in Moscow and the second city, Leningrad.

"The queues are behind us," headlined the liberal Komsomolskaya Pravda newspaper in a mocking double entendre.

A wistful article in another major daily recalled price cuts under dictator Josef Stalin in 1952.

"How can I manage on my pension?" said 70-year-old Muscovite Olga Agnolova, her face twitching with emotion. "Even butter — if I can get it — is practically beyond me now."

Two grocery shops on one street were "closed" for stock-taking and a third offered only apple juice and dried fish.

Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov has told citizens the long-overdue price rises, which will raise the general cost of living by over 60 per cent, were vital to unshackle industry from crippling subsidies and boost production. More hard tests were necessary to push the country towards a market economy.

The measures free a total of about 30 per cent of goods, largely luxury wares, from any controls. Checks on prices of other goods are expected to be relaxed in coming months.

"We've been living in a dream world for too long with these low prices," one young man commented outside a Moscow shop. "It's time for change even if it proves painful."

Dairy products and eggs doubled in price. Top quality beef, rarely seen in state shops, rose 250 per cent to seven roubles a kilogramme. In the peasant markets, free of state controls, the same cuts were selling for 50 roubles a kilogramme for those wealthy enough.

In a country where the average monthly salary is 270 roubles, the rises will mean severe hardship for some, even with a monthly compensation of about 60 roubles.

The rises may inflame the campaign of striking coal miners, now demanding up to 150 per cent pay increases.

Miners met Pavlov in the Kremlin Tuesday.

But strike committee officials, who have brought some 300,000 miners out, suggested there was little prospect of a quick settlement of the increasingly bitter action.

"We have decided if Gorbachev and Pavlov refuse to talk about the political issues we will get up and leave the room," Vladimir Ryzanov, of the Kuzbass strike committee, said.

His words were echoed by a representative of workers in the Donbass field, second only to the Kuzbass in output.

But a government spokesman said Pavlov would not discuss the miners' political demands, which include the resignation of Gorbachev and transfer of control over the mines from central authorities to the Russian Republic.

The strike in the Donbass, furnace of the Soviet Union's industrial boom in the 1920s and 1930s, began with purely economic demands for wage increases of up to 150 per cent. But after two weeks, the Donbass strikers joined Kuzbass workers in raising political demands.

The weekly Kommersant newspaper said about 200 of over 600 mines were now hit by strikes.

The dwindling supply of coal — reserves had already been drained by falling production over the last year — is inflicting serious damage in industries reliant on the fuel.

A document outlining the miners' position at talks with Pavlov and, later in the day Gorbachev, called for Gorbachev's resignation and the formation of a coalition government of national conciliation — a demand made by Russian Federation leader Boris Yeltsin since November.

Yeltsin, fighting to wrest power from central authorities, emerged from a special parliamentary session Tuesday with his authority intact despite attempts by hardline communists to challenge him. Parliament voted overwhelmingly to dismiss a proposal for a no-confidence vote.

Miners' leaders said economic reforms were doomed to failure if there was no immediate political change.

Oleg Rumyantsev, a leading radical reformer in the Russian parliament, said the miners' proposals were "the only chance for Gorbachev to prevent revolutionary chaos in the country."

Under the new pricing system, butter rises to 8.80 roubles from 3.50 roubles per kilogramme. Sugar rises to two roubles from 80 roubles, boots to 150 roubles from 60 roubles, a refrigerator to 450 roubles from 250 roubles and a Moskvich saloon car to 20,000 from 12,100 roubles.

Waiting lists for cars however are around 10 years.

Children's pushchairs double in price to at least 94 roubles and a girl's school uniform will be five times more expensive at 62 roubles.

Meanwhile, Soviet citizens must pay the black-market rate to take hard currency out of the country beginning Tuesday under new government regulations likely to slash foreign travel and make emigration more difficult.

The regulations more than quadruple the number of roubles Soviets must pay to buy the small amount of foreign currency they may take abroad.

Foreign travel already is difficult for Soviets, despite loosened border restrictions. Plane tickets are scarce and there is a \$200 limit on currency exchange. The higher cost of obtaining that currency will put foreign travel beyond the reach of many.

The new rate, valuing one U.S. dollar at 27.6 roubles is officially determined by a limited currency auction run by the state bank.

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES			
Tuesday, April 2, 1991			
Central Bank official rates			
	Buy	Sell	
U.S. dollar	677.0	681.0	
Pound Sterling	1202.0	1209.2	
Deutsche mark	406.1	408.5	
Swiss franc	475.1	478.0	
French franc	119.8	120.5	
Japanese yen (for 100)	486.7	489.6	
Dutch guilder	360.3	362.5	
Swedish crown	111.3	112.5	
Italian lira (for 100)	54.6	54.9	
Belgian franc (for 10)	197.3	198.5	

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES			
LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Tuesday.			
One Sterling	1.7590/7600	U.S. dollar	
One U.S. dollar	1.1571/76	Canadian dollar	
	1.6870/80	Deutsche mark	
	1.8975/85	Dutch guilders	
	1.4388/95	Swiss francs	
	34.71/75	Belgian francs	
	5.7260/10	French francs	
	12.5212/29	Italian lire	
	139.15/25	Japanese yen	
	6.1000/30	Swedish crowns	
	6.5750/5800	Norwegian crowns	
	6.4770/20	Danish crowns	
One ounce of gold	357.80/358.30	U.S. dollars	

WORLD STOCK MARKETS	
TOKYO — Stocks closed moderately higher, cautiously optimistic over the yen's recent strength against the dollar. The Nikkei Index rose 244.60 points, or 0.94 per cent, to 26,252.00.	
SYDNEY — Investors bailed out of Adsteam in an otherwise quiet day's trading, helping to push the market lower. Adsteam reported a \$1.3 billion consolidated loss before Easter. The All Ordinaries Index ended 9.3 lower at 1434.8.	
HONG KONG — Shares ended sharply higher on a positive swing in sentiment on Hong Kong's relations with China. The Hang Seng index ended up 44.02 points at 3,789.99.	
SINGAPORE — Share prices closed lower but off their day's lows as selective bargain hunting in the afternoon helped recoup part of earlier losses. The Straits Times Industrial Index closed at 1,480.49, down 5.88 points.	
BOMBAY — Share prices shrugged off scattered profit-taking by state-owned mutual funds to post gains for a second day. The stock exchange index rose 15.62 points to 1,209.63. The National Index gained 5.97 to 603.99.	
FRANKFURT — German shares finished a lacklustre post-holiday session just off the day's highs. The 30-share DAX index ended up 15.82 points at 1,538.62.	
ZURICH — Shares closed marginally firmer. The easier dollar dampened sentiment. The SPI index closed 1.9 points higher at 1,061.	
LONDON — Stocks closed just below the day's high as institutional spending turned round opening losses. The FTSE index ended 31.8 points up at 2,488.3.	

Argentina makes currency convertible

BUENOS AIRES (R) — Inflation-ravaged Argentina made its currency freely convertible with the dollar Monday in an effort to stabilise its economy and pull out of its worst-ever recession.

A law approved by congress last week forces the central bank to keep enough hard currency and gold in reserves to back the australs in circulation and to sell dollars on demand at 10,000 australs per dollar.

The law aims at restoring public confidence in the austral, which inflation has backed to a ten-thousandth of its original value since it was introduced in 1985.

Argentina suffers from inflation of over 100 per cent annually and has been in a recession for more than three years.

"We are beginning a new stage in which all rules point at stability," Economy Minister Domingo Cavallo told La Nacion, the leading daily newspaper.

He has pledged to post a \$100 million treasury surplus in April and to raise it to more than \$300 million a month this year by catching tax dodgers and selling off state assets.

To boost industrial production, last month Cavallo scrapped export taxes on farm goods and lowered utility rates for industries.

At the same time, to ensure competition in Argentina's highly concentrated markets, Cavallo cut import tariffs for manufactured goods and scrapped all non-tariff trade barriers.

"Bank interest rates are dropping and will continue falling, credit will reappear and investment will pick up. The outlook has changed 180 degrees since January," said economist Rodolfo Rossi, a former central bank president.

Rossi expects inflation to drop below three per cent a month this year after soaring 27 per cent in February.

Carmakers were among the first to react favourably to Cavallo's measures. Benefiting from lower taxes, makers of Fiat, Peugeot and Renault cars last week agreed to slash prices 33 per cent and freeze job cuts this year.

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3 killed in Albanian post-election unrest

TIRANA (R) — Three people were shot dead and several wounded in northern Albania Tuesday during clashes between police and protesters contesting the ruling Communists' sweeping victory in Sunday's elections, the opposition Democratic Party said.

It named one of the dead as local opposition party leader Arben Broxi and said two of the wounded, one a 14-year-old boy, were in critical condition.

A senior Communist Party official in Tirana, Robert Koli, put the toll at two dead and 12 injured and described the situation as grave.

Opposition officials said demonstrators in the northern city of Shkoder, a Democrat stronghold, surrounded the ruling Party of Labour headquarters Monday night, chanting "get out of town."

Students and workers returned to sit down in the main square in front of the building Tuesday morning, when shots were fired by security forces and apparently from inside the Communist headquarters, the officials said. Tanks were also on the streets, they said.

Koli confirmed firearms were used but he did not know by whom.

It was the first serious unrest in Albania since the Party of Labour, facing its first pluralist poll since Communists took power in 1944, won about two thirds of the 250 People's Assembly seats in Sunday's parliamentary elections.

The communists won heavily in the countryside in the mainly rural Balkan country while the four-month-old Democrats swept major cities and Tirana, where Communist President Ramiz Alia lost his parliamentary seat.

Official results of the election, which both main parties say involved some irregularities by their rivals, were due later on Tuesday.

International observers who monitored the vote said it was free and fair given the context of nearly 50 years of hardline one-party rule in Albania, for long Europe's most repressive Stalinist state.

In Tirana, police with riot gear at the ready moved back crowds gathering at the entrance to the capital's main diplomatic street in apparent fear that they could try to storm into embassies to seek passages to the West.

About 300 youths gathered in view of police on the steps of the nearby Roman Catholic Cathedral and chanted anti-Communist

slogans including "down Whelli Gjoni."

Gjoni, an unpopular hardliner and former Tirana party leader, is the number two man in the party. Some Albanians say his position has been strengthened by Alia's election defeat.

In the western town of Kavaje, about 40 kilometres from Tirana, residents said 20,000 workers had gone on strike in protest at the Communist victory. Protesters smashed the windscreen of a passing car with a number plate from a pro-Communist town.

"We wait for three days and if there is no change we will all go to Tirana," said 52-year-old Osman Mustafa. "If there is no vehicle to take us we will walk," he added.

Democrat leader Gramoz Pashko said Broxi was killed as he tried to urge protesters to go home. The party sent representatives to Shkoder to try to calm the situation.

"We have to calm the people. We have to give them a sense of hope," Pashko told Reuters.

He said a bomb had been found in the party's headquarters in the central industrial town of Elbasan and dismantled before it could explode.

Albania has been battered by unrest since Alia overturned a



Stalinist ban on opposition and allowed independent parties last December.

About 40,000 Albanians, disaffected by grinding poverty in Europe's poorest state and doubtful of Communist promises of reform, have fled to the West since last July.

The intellectual-led Democrats have said they will accept the election result unless it can prove wide-scale fraud and has appealed to its urban supporters for calm.

The party has ruled out joining a coalition with the Communists.

Moscow imposes emergency in part of Georgia

MOSCOW (AP) — The Soviet legislature has authorised a state of emergency in a part of Georgia torn by ethnic violence. The move came a day after a referendum in which nearly 99 per cent of the voters called for Georgia to secede from the Soviet Union.

The legislature's action allows the deployment of Soviet troops in state of emergency authorised in South Ossetia, a nominally autonomous region within Georgia.

The move, while intended to stop fighting between Georgians and South Ossetians that has taken more than 50 lives, could spark a larger conflict between Georgians and Soviets.

Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia has accused the Kremlin of fostering the violence in South Ossetia to thwart Georgia's independence drive.

Georgian residents voted Sunday to become the fourth of the country's 15 republics to reject President Mikhail Gorbachev's vision of a transformed Soviet Union united by a new union treaty.

Final results showed 89.5 per cent of the 3.5 million eligible voters went to the polls, and 98.9 per cent of the participants favoured secession, said Levon Iashvili of the independent news agency InfoGeorgia.

Some Soviet Interior Ministry troops are already in South Ossetia, acting as a buffer between the largely ethnic Ossetian city of Tskhinvali and the largely Georgian countryside of South Ossetia. Both Georgians and Ossetians are heavily armed.

But the state of emergency would authorise Soviet troops to take control of the entire region. That would be welcomed by the Ossetians, who favour remaining in the Soviet Union. But it could be violently opposed by the Georgian paramilitary groups operating in the region.

On Monday, Georgians shelled Tskhinvali with artillery and grenade launchers, wounding many civilians, according to the Interior Ministry of North Ossetia, an autonomous republic within Russia that is adjacent to South Ossetia.

The North Ossetians also claimed Georgians used armoured personnel carriers to invade the city but they were repelled by local fighters.

Soviets prefer Yeltsin to Gorbachev for president

MOSCOW (AP) — A new nationwide survey vividly shows the weakened popularity of President Mikhail S. Gorbachev: Five times as many Soviets say they prefer Boris Yeltsin over Gorbachev as president.

The poll, conducted in March for U.S. News and World Report magazine by a Soviet research centre, also found that more citizens support the Democratic Russia Movement than the Communist Party. Democratic Russia is a coalition of reform groups.

The poll was unusual in that it questioned 3,000 people in all 15 Soviet republics and all the autonomous republics. Many Soviet surveys cover only Moscow, where the population is more reform-minded than in the nation as a whole.

Citizens were asked, "who is the political figure you would most favour for the post of president of the Soviet Union?" Seventy per cent named Yeltsin, the leader of the Russian Republic, and 14 per cent named Gorbachev. Two per cent named Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov and 7 per cent gave other names, including Leningrad's reformist Mayor Anatoly Sobchak — another 7 per cent said they didn't know.

Yeltsin advocates faster, more radical reforms than Gorbachev, and he is willing to let independence-minded republics leave the Soviet Union.

Gorbachev outpolled Yeltsin only in three small Central Asian republics where hard-liners retain control: Tadzhikistan, Turk-

menia, and Kirgizia. The polls also showed the extent to which Soviets are divided about their political future.

Asked to name the political party they supported, 20 per cent said Democratic Russia, 14 per cent the Soviet Communist Party, and 5 per cent said the Russian Communist Party, which technically is part of the national one but is headed by hardliners. Eleven per cent picked regional popular fronts.

The rest named other organisations or did not know.

Asked if economic reform can succeed in the framework of the existing Soviet Union, 41 per cent said no and 29 per cent said yes.

Other questions and answers included: — Do you support the central government headed by Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov? Yes 13 per cent, no 73 per cent.

— Are you satisfied with living conditions in the USSR? Yes 13 per cent, no 81 per cent.

— Name the lifestyle that appeals to you: American 65 per cent, Asian-Japanese 23 per cent, European 12 per cent.

— Is the Soviet Union, as it was in the past, a world leader? Yes 47 per cent, no 32 per cent.

— Should the United States play a leading role in the world? Yes 53 per cent, no 6 per cent.

— Do you like Americans? Yes 51 per cent, no 18 per cent.

The International Sociological and Marketing Research Center, which conducted the poll on March 1-25, said it had a margin of error of 1.5 per cent.

German industrialist killed in most serious attack since unity

BONN (R) — Detlev Rohwedder, head of a controversial agency privatising former East German firms, was murdered in his home Monday night in the first serious guerrilla attacks since Germany united six months ago.

The Federal Prosecutor's Office said the leftist Red Army Faction (RAF), which has declared war on united Germany, had claimed responsibility in a letter found near the scene of the killing in a wealthy area of Dueseldorf.

"We assume it is authentic because it carries the known symbols of the RAF," spokesman Rolf Hannich said, referring to the emblem of a Kalashnikov automatic rifle superimposed on a five-pointed star.

Rohwedder, 58, was killed about 11.30 p.m. when one of three shots fired through the window of his house overlooking the Rhine

struck him in the back. His wife Hergard was wounded.

Several prominent politicians said they suspected the involvement of ex-members of former East Germany's Communist Stasi security police, which in the past sheltered and helped to train fugitive RAF guerrillas.

Johannes Gerster, parliamentary spokesman for Chancellor Helmut Kohl's Christian Democrats (CDU), called for an investigation into links between the RAF and the Stasi and said anti-terrorist squads should be given full access to Stasi files.

"The still unresolved past of the Communist system of injustice brings a new dimension of political violence into our daily lives," Gerster said.

As chairman of the Berlin-based Treuhand Agency, Rohwedder had the final say over

the fate of east Germany's outdated companies, hundreds of which were closed down because they were unable to compete in a free-market system.

His increasingly vocal critics in the ex-Communist East had described him as the callous face of Western capitalism.

Gerhart Baum, a former West German interior minister, said Rohwedder had been unjustly portrayed as the man responsible for mass unemployment in the East even though the causes of the region's economic misery lay in its communist past.

Rohwedder, a former Economics Ministry official who turned the ailing Ruhr steel manufacturer Hoesch into a profitable high-technology group, was the most powerful representative sent by Bonn to rescue the depressed East.

Kidnapped Swedes freed unharmed in Kashmir

SRINAGAR (R) — Two Swedish engineers kidnapped in Indian-ruled Kashmir by unidentified gunmen were freed unharmed early Tuesday, police said.

But mystery surrounded the whereabouts of Johan Jansson, 35, and Olle Loman, 37, when they had not arrived in Srinagar, summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir state, by late afternoon.

A senior policeman in Srinagar confirmed that he had been told by colleagues in the Kashmir Valley town of Beera, some 30 kilometres from Srinagar, that the two men had been released there and that they were to be sent back to the city immediately.

He said he was also puzzled why the men, who were kidnapped Sunday, had not arrived.

"It's possible that the security forces are questioning them," he said.

J.N. Saxena, police chief of Jammu and Kashmir, India's only Muslim-majority state, said he had been told the two men had been released but refused further comment.

No one claimed responsibility for the kidnapping, although police said suspicions were strong that it was an operation by separatist militants.

The militants have promoted their cause before by kidnapping relatives of prominent Kashmiris, but the Swedes were the first foreigners to be taken since the separatist rebellion erupted in January, 1990.

Police have reported some 2,400 deaths in the separatist campaign.

The two Swedes were on their way back from the Himalayan ski resort of Gulmarg Sunday when their car was stopped by gunmen.

Dance innovator Martha Graham dies at 96

NEW YORK (R) — Martha Graham, the American choreographer whose revolution in technique made her the foremost figure in modern dance, has died in New York at the age of 96.

She was the founder of the Martha Graham Centre of Contemporary Dance, one of the world's most prestigious dance schools, and established modern dance as an art form.

Graham died at home Monday of congestive heart failure, said one of her associates, Terry Rhein. She recently spent 10 weeks in hospital and had been treated for pneumonia. She became ill last December following a 55-day Asian tour with her troupe.

Over 70 years Graham created more than 170 dance pieces based on her pioneering technique of movement which was copied and used by companies throughout the world.

"She created a new system of leverage, balance and dynamics," fellow choreographer Agnes de Mille once said. "She found an original way of communication."

Born in 1896 in Pennsylvania, the diminutive Graham established herself first as a dancer but it was as an innovator that her genius shone.

She collected awards throughout her life, including the presidential Medal of Freedom, the 1979 Kennedy Centre Honours, the French Legion of Honour and the U.S. National Medal of Arts.

Her work sparked controversy. She often approached dance from a feminist viewpoint, with the lead nearly always a woman. Her dances explored biblical, mythological, historical and ancient Greek worlds.

Most modern U.S. dance choreographers, including Merce Cunningham, Paul Taylor and Twyla Tharp, studied her technique or danced with her company at some time.

"I've always wanted to be judged by my peers in the audience," Graham once said.

Germany badly divided 6 months after unification

BERLIN (R) — In just six months, the jubilation over German unity has turned sour as the nation's east sinks into depression and the west struggles for solutions with its prosperity at stake.

Unification last Oct. 3, hailed as a rebirth of German nationhood after 45 years of cold war division, has brought mass unemployment to the east and huge tax increases to the west.

"There are serious indications that unity could turn out a failure," said Hinrich Lehmann-Grube, mayor of Leipzig where the Movement For Unification bloomed in east Germany's anti-Communist street uprising of 1989.

Bonn's Chancellor Helmut Kohl became a folk hero in the east last year by equating unity with big money. But, according to an opinion poll released Tuesday, 84 per cent of east Germans now accuse him of promising affluence faster than he could deliver it.

Six months after unification,

one in three east Germans is unemployed. Some forecasters predict one in two will be out of work before an immensely costly government reconstruction plan — put forward after a futile wait for private investment — starts to take effect.

As the task of revamping the east's economy has proved resistant to quick fixes, latent resentments between east and west Germans have flared, underlining a psychological divide likely to last for years.

East Germans accuse Kohl's western-dominated government of callousness for letting vulnerable state industries fold under the principles of capitalism without seriously trying to overhaul them and save jobs.

East Germans are also upset by what they see as Bonn's "business as usual" attitude. Kohl went on his usual Easter slimming vacation in an Austrian Alpine resort as hundreds of thousands of east Germans marched for jobs in their dreary, dilapidated cities.

High-level panel to probe U.S. police brutality

LOS ANGELES (R) — Spurred by national outrage over the videotaped beating of a black motorist by white patrolmen, Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley appointed a high-level commission Monday to probe police conduct.

"There is a need for us to restore public confidence in the Los Angeles Police Department," Bradley told a news conference.

"I can think of no better way to start that process than appointing a high-level commission."

The chairman of the seven-member panel will be Warren Christopher, 65, who served as deputy secretary of state during the administration of former President Jimmy Carter.

Christopher, chairman of a Los Angeles law firm, gained international recognition in 1980 as the key negotiator in the release of 52 American hostages held in Iran. The beating of motorist Rodney King, 25, captured on videotape by an amateur photographer and shown on television around the world, created an

outray and led to calls for the resignation of police chief Daryl Gates.

Four officers have been charged with assault and excessive use of force in the beating on March 3 after they had stopped King for speeding. They are to be tried in May.

Bradley said the panel was modelled on the famous "Knapp Commission," headed by Whitman Knapp, which investigated police corruption in the New York 20 years ago.

Gates, who has refused to step down, announced last week he had appointed a retired judge, John Arguelles, and retired University of Southern California President James Zumberge to lead a separate inquiry into alleged police misconduct.

In addition to the two panels, the Los Angeles Police Commission is probing police conduct, and the FBI and the Justice Department are conducting their own inquiries into the case and police brutality elsewhere in the United States.

Gunmen kill Chilean senator

SANTIAGO, Chile (R) — Unidentified gunmen have killed a close adviser of former ruler General Augusto Pinochet, causing serious political problems for Chile's fledgling civilian government which is struggling to heal the wounds of the past.

Senator Jaime Guzman was being driven away from Santiago's Catholic University after giving a lecture when gunmen opened fire at point blank range on his car, police said.

Military hospital director Colonel Adolfo Jara said Guzman died on the operating table as doctors fought to save his life.

Newspapers received various calls claiming responsibility for two Marxist groups, the Manuel Rodriguez Patriotic Front (FPMR) and the Lautaro Youth Movement (ML). But police said they had no firm information

on who was responsible. Guzman, 44, a university law lecturer and member of the right-wing Independent Democratic Union (UDI), was a key ideologue of Chile's military government and had forecast the bloody 1973 coup in which Pinochet toppled elected Marxist President Salvador Allende.

Pinochet handed over to President Patricio Aylwin in March 1990 after losing a plebiscite. Pinochet, one of the first at the hospital after the attack, told waiting family and friends Guzman had died, witnesses said.

The government immediately condemned the killing. Interior Minister, Enrique Krauss, told a hastily-called news conference, "the government states its total condemnation. Let nobody be fooled: This is an act of terrorism."

But commentators said Aylwin would have to act quickly against the gunmen to avoid a right-wing backlash against his centre-left administration.

Guzman's killing shattered the image the government was trying to portray of steady progress towards repairing splits between leftists and Pinochet supporters.

Deputies of Aylwin's Christian Democratic Party visiting the hospital were protected by police as members of the crowd threw things and tried to hit them, chanting, "Aylwin-killed him" and "let's have a (military) coup."

Callers claiming to speak for right-wing groups rang news organisations threatening to kill Aylwin's government, in reprisal for Guzman's death.

Salvadoran civil war may be entering final phase

SAN SALVADOR (AP) — Leaders from both sides say this crippled nation's civil war may soon end after 11 years and 75,000 deaths.

The country's war weariness and steps toward democracy are among the factors behind a drive for peace so strong that the top ranks of the government, the military and the guerrillas all predict the fighting will end this year.

A round of potentially decisive peace talks begins this week, and the head of a year-old U.N. mediation effort is cautiously optimistic.

"I'm almost certain that this year will be the year of peace," said army Col. Innocente Montano, vice-minister of public security. "There has been real progress in the negotiations and we're getting very close to a happy ending."

Top guerrilla commander Joaquin Villalobos, meanwhile, told Salvadoran television on March 30 that the "conflict is in its definitive phase, and the definition will be through negotiations."

"We could soon be in a period of truce," he said.

San Salvador Mayor Armando Calderon Sol said of the Villalobos interview: "You know peace is near when you see a guerrilla commander in a suit and tie

talking on television like a politician."

Enhanced prospects for peace are the result of several factors: — Each side acknowledges that outright military victory over the other is impossible.

— Steps taken in the past decade toward creating a democracy have paved the way for the kind of leftist political activity that death squads stifled through thousands of killings in the early 1980s.

— Perhaps most importantly, Salvadorans are so tired of war that any political organisation hoping to retain or gain power must project a peacemaking image.

From peasant farmer to corporate executive, mention of the war brings an unfeigned expression of hopes for an end to the bloodshed.

In addition to the hundreds of thousands of people who have lost family members, millions feel the war every day through disruptions of electricity and water by guerrilla sabotage, searches at ubiquitous military checkpoints, and a climate of fear kept alive by gunfire and explosions.

Peace was the main plank of the political left's electoral campaign in March 10 legislative and municipal elections, and it worked. The leftist Democratic Conver-

gence boosted its share of the vote from 3.8 per cent in 1989 to 12.2 per cent.

The right, as well, senses political shifts. "Things have changed in El Salvador. If they hadn't, after all we've been through, we would be monsters," said Calderon Sol, who is also president of the government rightist Republican Nationalist Alliance (ARENA).

On Thursday, a 20-day round of potentially decisive peace talks begins in Mexico. The United Nations — represented by Peruvian diplomat Alvaro Desoto — has been mediating peace negotiations since April 1990.

At first, the talks were subject to press and public scrutiny and made little progress. But since they became secret in October, participants say they have involved more genuine give-and-take.

"The prospects (for serious progress in the peace talks) seem encouraging. But one should not underestimate the pending difficulties. They are huge," De Soto said in a telephone interview Monday.

The agenda includes constitutional, judicial and electoral reform, but reform of the armed forces will be toughest. For decades, the military has been a repressive, corrupt and authoritarian

impediment to democratic civilian government and a haven of human rights violators. El Salvador's conservative President Alfredo Cristiani, elected in mid-1989, also has balked at taking any drastic action against the powerful military.

But sources close to the peace talks, in which the armed forces are represented by an active duty colonel, say the military has agreed to a purge, a drastic reduction in size and changes to ensure subordination to civilian authority.

The same sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity, say agreement is near on means for effecting the changes.

The Farabundo Mari National Liberation Front, the rebel army, has proposed an accelerated negotiating schedule with a view to agreement on a ceasefire beginning May 30.

The group, which fields an estimated 8,000 guerrillas, has been fighting since late 1979 to defeat a succession of U.S.-backed governments.

The truce would remain in effect for several months while negotiations continued on political accords that would bring the definitive end to the war, the demilitarisation of El Salvador and rebel demobilisation.

Caver trapped

CARLSBAD, New Mexico (AP) — Rescuers were working their way inside the nation's deepest known cave to try to remove a woman trapped after breaking her leg.

Emily Davis Mobley, 40, a veteran cave explorer from Schoharie, New York, was trapped Sunday about 3.2 kilometres inside Lechuguilla Cave after she was struck by an 80-pound (36-kilogramme) rock. Lechuguilla, known to be 54 miles (86 kilometres) long and 1,565 feet (470 metres) deep, is about four miles (6.4 kilometres) west of the famed Carlsbad Caverns in south-eastern New Mexico. It was discovered in 1986. Undeveloped and closed to the public, the cave is the fourth largest in the United States. It is popular underground terrain for experienced cave explorers. Mobley was in Lechuguilla since Saturday with about five other members of a mapping expedition party. "She was working her way up through a pile of (rocks) and reached up and grabbed a rock. It came loose and struck her," said Jeff Denny, a ranger at Carlsbad Caverns National Park and spokesman for the rescue operation. It took some of her companions seven hours to reach the surface and initiate the rescue operation, Denny said. The rescue team had not yet begun the process of moving Mobley out of the cave, he said.

Asked to name the political party they supported, 20 per cent said Democratic Russia, 14 per cent the Soviet Communist Party, and 5 per cent said the Russian Communist Party, which technically is part of the national one but is headed by hardliners. Eleven per cent picked regional popular fronts.

The rest named other organisations or did not know. Asked if economic reform can succeed in the framework of the existing Soviet Union, 41 per cent said no and 29 per cent said yes.

Other questions and answers included: — Do you support the central government headed by Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov? Yes 13 per cent, no 73 per cent.

— Are you satisfied with living conditions in the USSR? Yes 13 per cent, no 81 per cent.

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— Should the United States play a leading role in the world? Yes 53 per cent, no 6 per cent.

— Do you like Americans? Yes 51 per cent, no 18 per cent.

The International Sociological and Marketing Research Center, which conducted the poll on March 1-25, said it had a margin of error of 1.5 per cent.

The House of Representatives voted last year to limit production to the 15 B-2s Congress has already approved and the Senate (upper house) came within six votes of going along with.

General Lee Butler, chief of the Strategic Air Command, said it would be the only bomber capable of sneaking through Soviet defences for nuclear bombing raids in a war in the next century.

But opponents say the need for the B-2, a long-range attacker conceived to replace the B-52 as a strategic nuclear bomber, died with the cold war.

They also say that at \$250 million a plane, the B-2 costs too much for what it might be called upon to do.

With a price tag like that, even

supporters concede that Congress will not approve all 75 of the B-2s President George Bush wants for the next century.

But it is too early to tell how deep the cut will be. One Republican supporter warned Bush administration officials at a hearing last month they would not get the 75 and suggested Congress might approve no more than 36.

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